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Sophia

# Days of a Lifetime



Days of a Lifetime  
A Day in the Life of a Person  
All the Days of a Person's Life  
All the Days of a Person's Life  
Tales of a Day in the Life of a Person

Illustrations by T. Rogers



# LAYS OF A LIFETIME.

THE

## RECORD OF ONE DEPARTED.

O suavis anima! qualem te dicam bonam  
Antehac fuisse, tales cum sint reliquiae!

Phaed. iii. 1. 5.



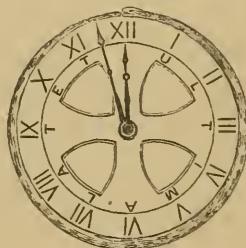
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TO SOPHIA.

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WHY SHOULD WE MOURN THEE,  
GIFTED ONE ! THY LYRE  
GAVE THE SWEET ECHOES OF THY SOUL'S WARM LAY  
STRINGS, SUCH AS ANGELS SWEEP, THE GOLDEN WIRE  
THAT VIBRATES TO A SERAPH'S TOUCH OF FIRE;  
THE HOLY, HOLY, SONG,  
IMMORTAL LIPS PROLONG ;  
THESE WERE THY HIGH ASPIRINGS, AND THY ROBE OF CLAY  
BOUND BUT THY SPIRIT-WINGS, WHICH LONGED TO SOAR AWAY

M N M



## THE LAMP STILL BURNING.

EVERY lifetime has its substance and its shadow. Its substance is itself, breathing, moving, and meditating in the world : its shadow is all of it that the world remembers, and cherishes when it has gone. There seem to be, as it were, two existences given to each person : one, a life amid realities ; the other, a life amid memories. In the first, he is a motion, a consciousness, and a delight to himself as well as to others ; in the second, he is a motion, stilled ; a nature, breathless ; a mirrored likeness only, fixed on the bright plates of other minds,—the unconscious object of interest and attraction to them alone. Thus shall we all linger after our lifetime. As we are estimated and regarded now, as our life is strong, marked, and earnest, as its circumstances combine to give it prominence ; in other words, as it is memorable, so shall we be remembered.

The simple incident of our birth alone, is, of itself, a surety that we shall leave a shadow behind us. Then the tender affinities of nature, the inseverable ties of blood, press and centre upon us. We are assigned at once a position in the intimate mosaic of relationship ; and when in time, one by one, we drop out, the sense of

the hollow want lingers over the rest, till, at last, all have fallen away and given place to the beautiful connections of another generation. This, if nothing else, is sure to commemorate us for a while ; but we all have, besides, more or less *intrinsic* power to perpetuate ourselves. This inward character can make the area of that shadow-lifetime almost boundless, and its length well nigh interminable. As it is strong, profound, impressive, and endearing, so will its memory be great, attractive, and complete.

How powerfully some natures move and manifest themselves ! What a magnetism goes out from them, drawing around them heart after heart, and mind after mind, till they die amid a throng of votaries ! These are they that linger long after they are gone, but yet not forever. A lamp burns, not more from its flowing oil, than from its surrounding air. He who has impressed himself upon the hearts of his contemporaries only, will burn on, at first brightly, but every year more dimly, as they "consume away," one after another, till, with the failing breath of the last of his age, he goes out into oblivion.

How many a grand being, thus filled with inexhaustible oil, has so flamed awhile in the narrow chamber of its generation, and been too soon extinguished by the vacuum around it ! Unwritten minds cannot last forever. But they whose hearts have flowed forth into language, have not only an oil perennial, but an atmosphere as wide as the world. They have discovered the Rosicrucian secret ; for they have lit an ever-burning lamp.

The intelligence that has sculptured into form its own inner life, has created for itself an imperishable personality, and one far nobler than the fading portraiture of memory and tradition. Mankind, in all ages, draw near to behold it. Their embrace is thrown around it. Their response to its expressive features warms them into life again ; its eyes brighten ; its mute lips speak ; the soul

of genius mantles the face ; the spirit of thoughts that can never die, and of feelings that shall be ever felt, glows once more into a vivid presence, with a beauty surpassing the original from which it sprung.

What an enchantment is this, that can keep a nature warm and living among distant generations ! What a magic is in the pen ! It is the wand that touches the censer of the heart with inextinguishable fire. The grand old Temple of Time is full of these ever-swinging censers ; and the long archways of its ages are fragrant with their incense.

I have before me now a lifetime in its Days of Shadow, a departed nature moulded into living words, a heart flaming with rich odors, a Lamp still Burning.

Say, that it is now nearly a score of years since she went away ; yet here are her beautiful lineaments, all radiant before me. What matters it, that her form lies indistinguishable in the vault of her kindred : she is present still ! I see her coming down through the night of those by-gone years ; coming, and gathering beauty, as the home-annals of her lifetime strew her way like flowers ; coming, and gathering brightness amid the loving voices that still utter her name ; coming, and charming away the shadows as she comes ; coming, bodied forth, a true, positive, authentic nature, in vesture wrought from the glistening threads she spun from her bosom to be the golden retreat of her genius ; coming over her "household hills ;" her eyes still brilliant with imagery collected there ; her step still slow and dreamy, as she lingers before the by-gone vistas of her mind ; her pensive presence, and her lyric movement rehearsing the former graces of her heart. I hasten to unlock the household gate, and reveal her to all who will greet her and love her.

How may I help to make her real ? How, but by showing forth these home-scenes amid which she dwelt. Let her shadow-lif-

linger where her substance-life lived. The same incidents that surrounded and inspired her then, will now fill out and restore to the world her warm and distinct being. If I were to spread forth the minstrelsy of her soul, only as writ in the metred notes she left behind, their deepest meaning would remain unsung, without the lyre of circumstance on whose chords they were born.

Well do I remember the fingers that swept those chords. Years ago, she appeared in the horizon of my childhood; and I can recollect looking up at her graceful form, and catching the glance of her large, dark eye. She faded soon from my young day; and yet, since then, around that memory a thousand memorials have gathered, and I see her shining, long before my time, in girlhood, fair, and bright, and loving; then, as when I beheld her, in full womanhood, pensive, sensitive, impassioned, circled about and energized by duty, receiving the fiery trials of the world, in her quivering breast, yet still shining on, so sweetly, so religiously, apparently carolling away her sorrows, and, even in sequestered moments, turning those harsh discords of the heart into the harmonies of verse.

As she moves there with her noble form, her face almost transfigured by the thoughts behind it; her nature, so profound, so versatile, so earnest, so charming; her career, touched often with romantic hues; I feel tempted to dream of her as the beautiful personage of a romance. Indeed, were it in my power, I would eagerly seize the wide scope of a fiction as the most befitting sphere for her to move in before the world. Not that I would profane a single actual circumstance, by an alteration or an exaggeration: but I can picture her to myself, as assimilating most aptly with the air and movement of such a work; kept modestly in shadow, only occasionally appearing, and then always to fascinate, while yet the whole plot and the chief attraction was centred in some purely fictitious character. Gladly, I say, would I seize such an opportunity,

if it were within my reach, of introducing the actual scenes and occasions that inspired her verses, in order to flash them here and there across the progress of the story. I feel, that, even in the blaze of a dominant interest, she would not pale, and, moreover, that many things might be told in such a connection, which would otherwise be withheld as too sacred. They could be, then, so mingled with surrounding fable, as to baffle and tantalize all conjecture, as to what was real and what imaginary.

In the absence of such a fellowship, I diffidently proceed to speak of her, alone ; but, as far as possible, still in shadow, shorn of much romantic incident, and severed from many associations that would have made her real and beautiful to those who will seek to know her. Sitting here, with time-stained papers scattered upon my table, with a many-voiced tradition whispering its memories, with the jewels of her mind lying clustered before me, embarrassed with difficulties of delicacy, and the paucity of available material, I can only try to interlace the modest tissues of her history, and adorn it with the embroidery woven by herself.

Sweet Dreamer ! long gone to her slumber ! she is still here in her shadow-life, moving in the shining robes of her poesy ! Sweet Slumberer ! I see her, as if come from the shadow-couches of the other world, walking in her dreams on the cliffs of the Wallkill, amid the music of its falling waters, walking on earth, and yet under the glories of heaven, waiting for her Lord, her *lamp still burning*.

I.

## THE AERIE IN THE HILLS.

THIS is the Age of Magic, when the great powers of nature are summoned, like the genii, from their secret habitations, and made to do the bidding of man ; when the merchant, disregarding time and space, like prince Houssain in the Arabian tale stepping upon his enchanted carpet, wings his enterprise with his wish, and transports his fortunes unto the uttermost parts of the earth ; when another dreams of cities rising in the wilderness, and lo ! they have sprung up, rich with merchandise, and thronged with inhabitants, almost in a single night. It was but yesterday, that the world had never seen all this ; but, since then, there has been a leap as of a thousand years. We are prone to look curiously into those days, not of old, but of a scarcely extinct generation, as if they belonged to a primitive condition of the race. And yet we appreciate them too. Our gaze lingers over them with a kind of filial sentiment. We feel interested in those antique schemes of wealth, and are astonished, often, at their vastness and success. But, although really close by, they are severed from us so completely by their obsolete forms and usages, that they seem already to be melting into the past ; even

now appearing in picturesque aspects, and with the haze of a sort of romance drooping around them.

It is such an enterprise, chiefly remarkable because conceived in the early years of the present century, whose picturesque and romantic incidents gather around the brief and fragmentary story I have to tell. Its projector was a merchant of energy, spirit, and great business talents, engaged in a prosperous trade with the Indies. A man of high and punctilious honor in all his dealings, he yet contrived to have a free, liberal, and generous mode of doing every thing. A disposition to enlarge and idealize whatever he undertook, characterized him throughout. He could not endure a small or contracted idea. Indeed, the only way by which he seemed to reconcile his peculiarly broad, generalizing, and imaginative intellect, to a mercantile life, was by habitually investing it with such relations and associations, as would have made it engaging to any one of a semi-poetic, semi-philosophic turn of mind. He was the very one to originate a brave and an advanced thought, and the very one to execute it. This, to which I allude, changed the whole tenor of his life, leading him gladly out of the maze and snarl of city traffic.

He was spending a summer among the Highlands of the Hudson. One day, he and his wife were induced to prolong their usual drive, in order to visit a region back in the country, of whose beautiful scenery they had frequently heard. The road led them into a high valley, nearly a thousand feet above the Hudson, through which flowed a young and rapid river, hastening northward to its outlet many miles away. From this point, they could see the long, rolling forms of mountains recumbent against the horizon, looming, all around them, through the blue-tinted spaces of the atmosphere, and shutting them in on every side as with huge purple walls. The river, at their feet, had wandered from its unfailing springs in a neighboring state,

streaming broadly through meadow and valley, when here it approached the edge of a rocky height, and plunged downward into a gorge, washing away earth and stones in its thundering descent, and dashing furiously between its severed cliffs; but, before it wound out of sight, subsiding into the same quiet and rippling current it was before.

The roar of these falls filled the air. The hills and vales that sloped for miles down hither, from the east and west, were crowned with thick forests, and interspersed with areas of the greenest vegetation. Save here and there the smoke of a farmhouse in the distance, the vast region seemed well nigh uninhabited; and, near by, there was no sign of human presence, but a mill nestling at the very foot of the falls, shaking in its thunders, and, further down the stream, on the edge of one of its steep declivities, a cottage, almost buried in a grove of locusts.

It may be imagined, how keenly the merchant and his wife enjoyed this scene, as it burst upon them. But, the mind that had been so long sharpened and disciplined by the exigencies of commerce, till every instinct was alert for a business opportunity, could not avoid its intuitions here. Whilst she in ecstasy pointed out the diversified loveliness of the landscape before her, he was gazing beyond, at what in the course of time would be forthcoming to change it. This solitude would be thronged with a busy population. Although these wild beauties might be dimmed and marred, yet the rude utilities of the day would inevitably intrude upon them; for, no such power as was concentrated in that untamed waterfall, could long remain unknown and unenslaved. The free waters bounding so jubilantly down those shelving rocks, would be turned aside into sluggish canals, and made to fall on revolving wheels. Many-windowed factories would be abutted against the abrupt sides of the winding river: and the green slopes above, be inter-

sected by graded streets, and covered with the dwellings of a thriving community.

Strange must it have been to the simpler instincts of the wife, to hear such a prophecy ; but no sooner was it uttered, than its fulfilment seemed as sure as that those floods resounded. It was a dream, but of one accustomed to dream of what might be. The idea from that moment filled his soul. He resolved to bear out his own prediction, and immediately himself to undertake what, if allowed to remain, would certainly be attempted by some one else. No sooner had he made up his mind, than he set about it. The moment he was able to do so, he closed his flourishing business in the city, and removed thither. He purchased extensive tracts on both sides of the river, making the falls the centre of the estate, as it was to be the vitalizing nucleus of the enterprise ; and, with every energy and resource he could command, he entered upon his task.

Since then, he has passed away ; and I have around me the various documents which tell the history of the succeeding years, and am therefore familiar with the rare motives that led him to cling to his purpose, as long as life lasted. In a commercial point of view, it promised him a flood of wealth, as perennial as the falls. As an enterprise, it was attended with hazard and difficulty enough to stimulate his courageous and persistent spirit ; as a conception, it reached further than mere riches or excitement, into never-ending aspects and incidents, most engaging to his imagination, and kindling to his heart. In the papers before me, I find all the evidences of his delight in it, as something to construct and adorn. Maps, showing streets liberally laid out, and broad parcels of land appropriated to purposes that could in no way have been turned to gain ; sketches of churches and glebes ; plans for schools, and innumerable other improvements ; all lying together, the relics of the life-long dream of a lofty and generous mind.

So he went there to live, while yet the waterfall flowed in untrammelled beauty, while the foliaged river-banks remained in the rugged shapes into which the waters had worn them, while the wooded hills and verdant valleys lay still in their native wildness. His lovely and brilliant wife also left her refined circle, to follow him. He fitted up the cottage among the locusts for a dwelling: and she turned it into a home. Of her I would draw no fancy picture, but tell what was told to me. She was attractive beyond the most of her sex. In person, tall and graceful, she walked the queen. A kind of enchantment seemed to surround her footsteps; and the wit and witchery of her tongue had made her the delight of many a social hour. And now, in the wintry days (<sup>1</sup>) of her husband's weariness and anxiety, the fire of that cottage hearth-stone was not more warm and bright than she; and those summer hills, cheerful as was their bloom, did not equal the beauty she threw over his household, in its seasons of promise and prosperity.

Such were the parents of Sophia; and such was the environment they had put around her. She was one of their four fair daughters; and of them all displayed the most their prominent characteristics, and was most susceptible to the natural influences amid which they had placed her. Some natures stand alone from the very first, apparently underived; but hers was curiously referable to the two antecedent natures from which she sprang. They seemed to reappear in her. Her soul was a rich monogram: their two characters abbreviated and interwoven into one: a throbbing, inventive brain, and a glowing heart, intricately and rarely blended into the single, mystic idiosyncrasy, genius.

To me it appears a most beautiful incident, that a poetess should be thus spiritually born. In the spectacle of her young being, it was marvellous to see the two natures convergent and flowing together. The play of their features mingled expressively in her

countenance. The imagination and practical ability of her father came combined with the flashing wit and impassioned heart of her mother; and with the heritage of force, energy, and spirit derived from one, she received the fine form, and the fair, pensive lineaments of the other. But these peculiar auspices did not end here. As her soul was hereditary, so it was apposite to the scenes of her infancy. The very bias of mind and sentiment that had been parentally imparted to her, assimilated at once to the circumstances that had been the parental taste and choice. The same instincts that pervaded her being had, as it were, built her a nest, high up among the hills, where she was first to flutter her pinions, and warble her earliest notes.

These poetic situations of her birth and childhood, must be my apology for much that I have taken pains to relate. All the aspects of her lifetime, and all its inspirations, were so clearly attributable to her parents, and to the surroundings they had built for her, that she would have lost much of the finer interest that invests her, unless they had thus been mentioned. Indeed, it seemed to be a profane indifference not to do so. I could not look back into the atmosphere of those dim years, and see the infant brood nestling within the precincts of so much beauty, and amid the foliage of so much love, without seeing also the parent natures hovering near, and feeling the suggestion of their presence, that it was they who had gathered those little ones there, and who were nurturing the first motions of their lives.

The child thus prefigured as well as born, herself, in miniature, foreshadowed the woman. Many will remember the little fairy thing, with her long, curling hair, and beaming eyes, and glowing face, as she was wont to bound over the dew-wet lawn, frolicsome as the doe, her pet and playmate. And yet this was but the outward phase of a character unusually deep and peculiar for one so

young. She was often seen in quiet, pensive reverie, and even in playful moments, giving evidence of an intensely affectionate nature ; clinging to those she loved, yearning incessantly for their sympathy, and, more than once, when self-banished by some childish trouble, taking refuge before her reflection in the mirror, that "some one might be weeping with her." Behind all this again, lay the rich energy of a quick, impressible, and thoughtful intellect, which, being yet in its babyhood, unconsciously thirsted for and drank in the sentiment of things around her.

A plantling, set thus amid such fertilizing scenes, she put forth the tender shoots of an unusual being. Long before it was suspected, her soul was covered with the buds of poesy ; each touched with the faint hues of her dawning fancy, and redolent with infant fragrance, but its little petals yet tightly closed. The other day, I found a few of these that, in the warmth of her vernal heart, had burst prematurely into bloom, and which had been eagerly preserved because of the promise that was in them of unfolding excellence.

In searching among the papers of one now sometime departed, (the brother of her mother,) but well known in by-gone days of the political world, whose elegant culture and literary taste had been thrown around her girlhood, I found here and there, mingled with state documents, essays, and the correspondence of some of our nation's greatest men, letter after letter of hers, dated during her early years. It struck me as a most touching instance of amiable feeling, when I found these girlish epistles thus as carefully put away as papers that concerned the vital affairs of a long and active life. But I was still more touched, when I came at last to four or five of her first effusions, dated some time before the rest, as far back as her tenth year. Here they were, copied together on a sheet all worn and yellow with age. The trembling, uncertain child-hand, the little errors and erasures, the anxious carefulness of the rounded

letters, with the few words of infant apology underneath, give an interest and authenticity to them which I cannot reproduce in print.

Of one of them I have heard this family tradition: "Her governess had given her little circle a question in arithmetic. Sophia was so absorbed, as not to notice, that the slates were being collected, when hers was suddenly taken from the hand of the blushing little culprit. The surprise of her teacher equalled her own mortification, at finding not arithmetical numbers, but those of a different kind!"

They personify the rose and the violet; and expostulate with the latter for not bearing herself so proudly as the former; and display that passionate love of flowers, and perception of an almost human language and analogy in natural objects, afterward so noticeable in her.

I feel tempted to present one of the smallest in the tiny cluster, as it gives a curious insight into a baby imagination. It was suggested by what was the greatest event of her child-life. Another sister had made its appearance,—the youngest in the fair quartette. What an intense interest she took in the little stranger! There was no limit to her admiration and delight. Whether asleep or awake, out came the baby for exhibition: of her excitement on its account, there was no end night nor day. It is a common thing in a household, to see one infant toddling about under the burden of another; and we are led to wonder what the nature of the child's sentiment is. If any are still solicitous on this point, I can now gratify them by appending the few lines, in which Sophia's irrepressible impulse to record her emotions in words and imagery, has brought the mystery to light. Every verse, with all its crudity, reveals a curious phase of mind, especially the amusing, moralizing strain, and preceptive dignity of the last two:

“O, sweetest babe of heavenly bliss!  
Thou art thy parents’ future joy;  
And thy fond sister’s anxious wish  
Doth many a thought employ.

“Whilst kneeling at thy cradle, dear,  
My heart is always fill’d with thee,  
And list’ning to thy sweet complaints,  
Whilst thou art prattling on my knee.

“Thou art, my dear, on life’s wide stream,  
With many disappointments there;  
For life is nothing but a dream,  
And only an illusive snare.

“Seek to obtain fair virtue’s cause,  
As on that stream you rise in love,  
Till Heav’n shall call thee to his laws  
To dwell in ecstasy above.”

---

The child developed into girlhood; and here comes a school-episode in the city. I find these half-dozen years illuminated by her correspondence with him who so affectionately treasured up her childish verses. These letters are full of earnest feelings and grave aspirations, and even studies, that scarcely any one would have suspected to exist in the bright, wild, wayward, lovely creature, as her companions only deemed her. The series is very incomplete; but I see allusions, now and then, to poems that had been enclosed, and trains of reflection pursued from letter to letter, where many connecting parts are missing. Still I can perceive, that it is a beautiful spirit which unfolds itself in these worn, dimmed pages; and, as I

read them, I am astonished at hearing, from other sources, accounts of a mischief-loving girl, always in pursuit of fun, sparkling with amusing traits, ever late at school and utterly defiant of its routine : yet changing the frowns of her teacher into smiles, with her winning ways, and getting into favor in one quarter, without losing her popularity in another. She has herself given an entertaining sketch of one of these pranks, which, though written long after it took place, I may as well introduce here.

### SCHOOL DAYS.

FROM A JOURNAL OF FLOWERS.

" There are some faded rose-leaves on the first page of my journal, so much changed from their original beauty, that it would puzzle the herbalist to arrange the petals, or even to dignify them by name. Their bright color has long since departed, and the odorous spirit has vanished from its beautiful resting-place. I have used them, as characters to *italicize* a line in the dull history of a school-girl's hours ; and they are such faithful chroniclers, that if I were better read in the mysteries of the Pythagorean philosophy, and its ideal world, I would crave for them the same indulgence that the believer in the sublime theory of the metempsychosis has awarded to souls. Flowers are among the bright things of Paradise ; and why may not the fragrant spirit of these leaves, in its transmigratory state, be yet wandering over the rich gardens of 'the Fountain of Roses,' or sparkling in the drop of ottar which the bright-eyed Persian consigns to the Haidees of her golden Sachnet ?

" 'There is some rust about every one at the beginning.' Mackenzie has given it to his Man of Feeling ; and if we understand the

sentiment, it is that yielding sensibility which corrodes and darkens under the ordinary influences of life ; which clings to us in youth, but which a few hard rubs with fortune is known to dissipate. I well remember, when the gloomy oxyd first stole over my sensibilities, from a little cloud in the atmosphere of feeling that shadowed anticipation for a moment. I was a school-girl, and, as such, still occupied that obscure unregarded nook of life, which attracts but little attention, and from which we are permitted the glorious privilege of the poet, to view society in the distance ; ‘to peep at such a world,’ and to invest it with all the pageantry of imagination. I had not climbed the rocky ‘Hill of Science ;’ yet I stood quite high enough in my own good opinion. Friendship, sincerity, lasting attachments, and all the diversified scenery of the affections, were spread like a universe around me ; and though, it is true, in some of my friendly fields, thorns were already planted, and some of my ‘eternal’ attachments had already proclaimed their evanescence, yet the love I bore to my pen and paper hung, like an unclouded firmament, over a rough and treacherous world. I never shone there a star ; and my flashes were as harmless and unnoticed as those of a midsummer’s night ; looked upon for an instant, and as instantly forgotten. O ! how often have I wandered from my playmates, during the hour of intermission, to some lonely corner of our playgrounds, where, with my pencil and the leaf of some neglected writing-book, I have poured my whole soul, as I thought, on its blue-ruled page ; unmindful, while wandering through the long and sober avenue, that the bell had rung, and all was order and quiet again in our school-room, an ! I a mere adjective belonging to school-books and my instructor.

“ Yet in spite of all the abstractions and mischances it drew around me, it once redeemed me from the anathema of stupidity. Few can imagine the utter scorn with which that ‘mingled yarn of

good and evil,' a school-class, regards the hapless individual emphasized a dunce. I had always a strong antipathy to the name. Active faults have some redeeming colors; but the neutral tint of stupidity even now appalls me. I remember the day well; and a better day could not have been chosen to cloud one's hopes, and give the heart a little of that rust with which I commenced this chapter; capricious and showery; half sunshine and half gloom; just such a day as will frolic with the nerves of the hypochondriac, and hang them, like Shakespeare's Sailor-boy, 'on the slippery clouds,' or toss them in a gale to 'teter' on a sunbeam. It was such a day, when I had gathered all the paraphernalia of rhetoric, belles lettres, etc., that crowd the requisitions of a boarding-school prospectus. I closed the front door, and went 'unwillingly to school.' O! how presentiment flitted over my bosom with the clouds above me! A mist hovered over nature, and wrapped me in its shroud. It seemed as if a universal sympathy bound me, for an instant, to all creation; yet envy clung to the assimilation, like a worm to a rose-leaf; for every thing seemed happier than I. The little milliner girls passed me: they were *free*, and I envied them, with their band-boxes on their arms, and their cares all bound up in their ribbons. Trouble seemed to have left them, and to have run to me like a pet kitten. And I saw a sweep perched like a blackbird on the chimney-top, and I even envied him. And why not? He had risen by hook and by crook; but then he had reached the height of his ambition, and could laugh at the trammels that at first impeded his progress.

"But I had reached my school. The long rows of bonnets and shawls that were slumbering on their pegs, and the perfect quietude that reigned among them, convinced me, that it was long past the hour that tolled the death of freedom. Every thing looked reproachful. The dark green wall frowned, the bonnets pouted, and the very

knob of the door turned snappingly, as I entered. While making my congée, the buzz of a hundred voices rushed upon me : French rigmarole and orthography floated through the atmosphere, or fluttered over the *limbs* of crudition, like so many wounded songsters. Large benches painted green, that ominous color, were ranged round the room ; and many a languid, living thought rested inert and unemployed on its mathematical line. In one corner, tall, gaunt, and toothless, sat the vicegerent, a second officer in our republic. O, what ‘a mighty little mind,’ as they say in Richmond, was hers ! Its highest aspirations were bounded by a button-hole, and all she knew of ambition, nestled in a work-basket. She always occupied one corner in our school-room ; and her chair seemed to have belonged to it. When I left her presence in the afternoon, and found her again in the same place in the morning, in the same costume, and with the same unaltered physiognomy, I used to wonder if she had been there ever since I left the room. Her favorites were generally her carrier pigeons. But I, alas ! no darling, was never sent to the sanctum of her bed-room for her spectacles, nor had the envious distinction of adjusting her cushion. Sometimes, when entering the room with a most peculiar shuffle, (poor soul ! it was her own,) I have been stigmatized as the author of all the mischief that agitated our commonwealth. It was I who turned the blinds so often, to admit the air, and acquired so rapidly a movement she had taught my compeers, in an English quadrille, that it ever after affected my retreating footsteps. Although this reckless mirth made me enemies, there were a few laughter-loving spirits that clung closer to me, and liked me better for these very reproaches.

“ But, on this eventful morning, neither her prejudices nor her predilections disturbed or entered once into my speculations for the day. My anxieties were alone dependent on the master-spirit, the genius of our little world ; and now, even, from the distance of years,

would I waft a blessing on that gentle one, whose kindness fell alike on the understanding and the heart; who, by the influence of example, and the discipline of herself, trained each heart in ‘the way it should go,’ without any harsher appeal than to its own reason and affection. She was standing, when I entered, in the recess of a folding door, and my class, like the twelve signs of the zodiac, were ranged around her. But the sign was in Libra, and the scales were poised, when I entered to be weighed and found wanting. A new theory had been started. When will theorists let the world alone? It was urged on Mrs. ——, and she adopted it experimentally. Some *judicious* parent had suggested it, and begged the trial. Violent exercise of the memory, it was maintained, would increase its power. This might apply, where correspondent strength of mind required great exertion to develop a weight of intellect, that called for a mighty grasp; but as such is not the every day character of the human mind, the rule, of course, can only apply partially. A pygmy, in mind or body, can never be stretched beyond its altitude. Mrs. —— turned to me, in her affectionate manner: ‘I will ask you a number of questions, my dear girl; and without waiting a reply to each, I will require an answer to *all*, when I have finished, in the same order in which they were asked. Make the effort; if you succeed, I shall be gratified, and you will be amply compensated by the improvement of your memory:

‘By what names are the secular kings of Hindostan known? To whom do the Hindoos render homage? Where are the purest pearls found? Where the richest diamonds? And what curiosity do the Tartars boast of?’

I was overwhelmed. All the questions I could have answered, singly; but to remember the question to fit the answer,—and well I knew it must appear in no homespun dress,—required a mind like

Napoleon's. The girls looked to me with an appealing expression. They had in vain essayed it. Mrs. —— fixed her dark eye on me, but I was silent. Again were the queries repeated, but all in vain. I could have answered the first and the last; but the others were skipping round my mind, forgetting their places, like so many city belles in a contra dance. Again other questions were put, with like numerical disappointment; and now I refused even the effort, and, dispirited and offended, we sought our seats. My place in our class had often vacillated, and I in its opinion perhaps as often; but if I had ever queenied it, my transit from a throne to a very common place in their heraldry, was as sudden as any despot's on record. One of the sweetest girls in the whole world,—the only one I could see above me in the class, and yet feel reconciled,—was deputed to ask the text for our next day's composition. It was asked and answered: ‘What is the use of acquiring lessons, if you do not understand them?’ No kind good-bye from Mrs. ——; and, sad and spiritless, we returned to our homes.

“The old proser may talk of school-day happiness, and the few anxieties that hover over that green spot of existence. He has been so long a wanderer over the rough paths of life, tossed by its vicissitudes, and buffeted by its sorrows, that he has forgotten the sensitiveness of his earlier nature. It is not that pilgrim grief that walks unsandalled over the burning desert of affliction; but childhood, with its shoes off, will show less philosophy, and feel more acutely the pebbles of its play-ground. Was it strange, then, that I passed a sleepless night, or strange that I penned, the next morning at daylight, the following commentary on her text? I think the oft-quoted line of Pope must have had some influence with my muse, as I perceive she has introduced her remonstrance with a similar commencement. Perhaps I was thinking, that ‘twigs’ should not be crushed by superabundant weight, no matter how the ‘tree’ is inclined.

“ ‘Tis education polishes the mind,  
And intellect’s rude ore is thus refin’d ;  
Ere gems are found, their sepulchre is riv’n,  
And mind is delv’d, ere thought can flash to heav’n.  
If it be sweet, through science’ path to stray,  
To gather fragrance for life’s wintry day,  
Then why enclose with thorns each hallow’d flow’r,  
And grasping blossoms, bid us feel their pow’r ?  
O, who would win a wreath so dearly bought,  
And wound the spirit for a brighter thought ?  
Our wearied nature suppliant would ask  
Thy kindly aid, to smooth our thorny task,  
And beg of reason but this little boon,  
Ask each one question, let each answer one ;  
The brain tumultuous, in confusion toss’d,  
Thought leaves the helm, and Reason’s self is lost ;  
And Mem’ry flutters o’er the question-wave,  
And mourns the wreck she strove in vain to save.

“ Can we Golconda’s diamond mines explore ?  
Then search for pearls near India’s smiling shore ?  
Then fancied homage to a Llama pay ?  
Kneel to a Boodh, or tremble ’neath ‘Transfa ?’  
Or view the Bootern hills, with verdure dress’d ?  
Compare them with chill Thibet’s snowy vest ?  
See Nature’s table spread stupendous round,  
As if for giants rear’d, on Tartar ground ?  
Thought travels fast, but education’s loom  
Must weave its vesture, ere it finds a doom ;  
Let Mem’ry bring again thy youthful days,  
When application gain’d its meed of praise ;  
When no entangling question stamp’d thee dunce,  
Nor brain nor tongue could answer ten at once ;

And recollection will restore the smile,  
That cheers the languor of our mental toil.  
When that is hidden, clouds obscure our sky,  
And trembling show'rs are seen in ev'ry eye :  
The brightest star within our little sphere,  
This morning veil'd its brilliance in a tear ;  
O, then, in reason grant this little boon ;  
Ask each *one* question,—let each answer *one* !

“ Homer won for himself a brilliant wreath, and left his poetry in the hearts of his hearers. For years, it had no other resting-place : and all we enjoy of it was gathered from the bosoms of those who cherished it. Mine perished in a day ; but I, too, had my reward ; the renewal of our school liberties, and a kiss that was worth all the Olympic wreaths that ever were bestowed.”

The foregoing incident took place when she was only fourteen ; and, I need not add, occurred strictly as she relates it. The only alteration I have made in the lines, is in withholding the names of several of her classmates. Perhaps it may add to its interest, if I append the following, received from Mrs —— in reply :

“ Must I regard these lines as thine,  
And thou a vot'ry of the tuneful Nine ?  
Or, hast thou borrow'd what thou'st sent to me ?  
If so, such pilf'ring must not, must not, be.  
But if thou'rt warm'd with sweet poetic fire.  
And thy young hand aspires to strike the lyre.  
O touch but seldom, 'tis enchanted ground,  
On which we tread while music wakes around.”

## ENIGMA.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF FIFTEEN.

To joy I'm a stranger, to sorrow unknown,  
Though I mingle in mirth, yet mis'ry's my home ;  
In happiness dwell, am forever in pain,  
And never in tears, though I ne'er cease to complain ;  
Affection may claim me her vot'ry from birth,  
And friendship adopt me, though not of this earth ;  
I am foster'd by malice and nurtur'd by pride,  
And to virtue and villainy ever allied ;  
Yet a thought that was grov'lling I never could trace,  
Nor dream of a deed that was dastard or base ;  
I am part of the sigh that breathes woe or breathes love,  
And part of the spirit that wafts it above ;  
I dwell with the maniac, in his griefs bear a part,  
And am wreath'd with the smiles that encircle his heart.  
Where wit is I am, and without me 'tis naught,  
'Twould signify nothing, no, nothing of thought ;  
In spleen never was, in retort find no charm,  
Though in satire I am harsh, yet am not known to harm ;  
In a passion each day I may have been seen,  
Yet twice in a passion I never have been :  
An aërial being, on the winds I am tost,  
In fire I exist, but in water am lost :  
Though my dark form is wreath'd in the shadows of night,  
I spring with the morning and sunshine to light :

Or, chaining the whirlwind as though it were mirth,  
I flash in the lightning and vanish from earth;  
To the world I'm a stranger, though always in view,  
And with all minds conversant, though never with you ;  
Celestial by night, yet to heaven unknown,  
Terrestrial by birth, though the earth's not my home,  
A prey to ambition, a stranger to fame,  
Ask the egotist quickly, he best knows my name.

## II.

### KATY-DID AND KATY-DIDN'T.

MEANTIME the dream had become real. A thriving, busy little town had displaced the wilder beauties of the vale, and tamed the country round. The spinning-wheels were no longer seen turning before the doors of the rude farm-houses in the neighborhood, but thousands of spindles now whirled dizzily, in tall factories built against the steep declivities of the river. Under the auspices of an incorporated company, every thing teemed with promise and prosperity. As predicted, the free waterfall had been confined, and enslaved. From the cedar-crowned heights that overhung it on one side, might be seen a canal, hewn out of the opposite rocky cliff, carrying a sluggish stream high up in the air along its brow, in strange contrast to the sparkling rapids that still foamed and eddied in the gorge beneath. Back of this, groups of stores and dwellings covered the broad, irregular slope, which stretched from the heights about the Falls downward to the meadow banks below. Never was village more beautiful, nor more picturesque. The land lay so peculiarly, that, although thick with foliage, not a house nor church-spire was hid-

den ; nor could one be built, without its white walls, shining conspicuously through the green, wherever the spectator might stand. In the back-ground of these again, on the eminences that overlooked the high valley, and bounding in the scene, were the seats of the gentlemen capitalists who had come to reside there.

The whole place shook with enterprise. The spirit of the Falls appeared to have entered the people, and the missing reverberations of their now subdued roar, seemed to have returned in the music of the pealing bells that rung the hours of labor, and in the machinery clattering through the live-long day.

There were other signs of life. From this point, three physicians set out daily, in their gigs, to desolate the country round! And here also, "two infant lawyers and an old one," promoted a legal and equivocal harmony, with a success satisfactory to their ideas of a livelihood. Of course the village was ever growling at the changes in the political atmosphere, for its very life-blood was a water-power, and all its stamina lay in a tariff. Singular enough, the "Doctor's Office," on whose shelves stood the whole pharmacopœia in phials, was the constant resort of those who would save the "body politic." Here, around the fount where trickled the waters of health, and where the everlasting spray of gossip flew about, the village magnates met daily in noisy conclave, and squeezed all the questions before Congress into that tiny apartment, as easily, as the doctor rolled all the ingredients of a blue mass into a single pill.

But there was an Upper House, where these questions received a more formal consideration. A society met weekly in the ball-room of the Hotel; and there these same big-sounding tongues softened their uproar, and straitened their arguments into the solemn oratory of debate. The great whirlpool of public affairs, found this little corner on its outer edge, and eddied quite as im-

portantly here, as it boiled about in wider circuits. Last of all, sure token of prosperity,—crest on the wave of success,—was a newspaper ! “The Republican Banner,” flung its folds to the breeze. Its editor, “Crito,” as he styled himself, bore it bravely and prosily in all seasons ; in time of peace, marshalling under it the awkward squad of “local items,” and in time of war, waving it vigorously over the fierce battles at the polls.

These were blooming days ; and Sophia bloomed into womanhood with them. I hardly know how to picture her now. As she enters the world, her connections and associations multiply, and her expanding nature becomes so blended with them, that I can scarcely describe her, without describing some one else. But though thus obliged to remove many a light which shines upon her, and to keep her more in shadow than I wish, yet I may give such an outline as any imagination can easily fill.

A few years before this, she lost her mother, and grew up without the moulding influence of that gifted spirit. Yet every day she seemed to inherit and display her, as if she was to reign in her stead. Whether she moved in the brilliant circles of the city, or in the scenes of her country home, the same loveliness, the same gracefulness, re-appeared ; she flashed also in quick repartee, and startled while she charmed all around her with unexpected sallies, and improvisations. Such was her air and look in society, as “the gay creature of its element.” From the numerous instances furnished me of this sparkling, outside phase of her character, I select the following village episode, in which she figured, as something that may bring her very interestingly before the fancy of many.

It happened, one summer, that the members of the Debating Society ventured to leave the exciting field of politics, and to array before their assembled wisdom the delicate question : “Whether

woman can boast equal mental power with man?" As might have been expected, such a theme raised a great excitement among the fair ones in the region round about; and the debating hall was, on this occasion, filled with a rustling and threatening audience. "The Squire," the leading lawyer of the place, strenuously advocated the negative of the question. He was the literary Goliah, and all these Philistines looked up to him. The "Banner" was under the patronage of his pen, and his voice was lifted up, as of a champion, in all affairs of state. After him, on the same side of course, followed his armor-bearer, chiefly noted for his devoted imitation of the manner and speeches of Patrick Henry. They all little thought what was to befall them; that, with a mere pebble of satire, a woman's "mental power" was going to rout the whole of them, and make them *game* for the fowls of the air.

Crito received an extraordinary communication for his paper. A Katy-did had become cognizant of how matters were going on; and, after chirping satirically, first over political things in general, and then over the village, finally took up its station among the astonished members of the Debating Club.

[ For the Republican Banner. ]

Mr. Editor; Pliny says, "There are insect vexations, which sting us and fly away," and if you catch me buzzing around the columns of your paper, O Crito! do not brush me aside, even if "in the ignorance of my backwood spirit," I chirp too loudly. Crush me not with a paragraph, nor imprison me forever in a criticism. You are the only lion I fear in the mental desert; and, from my shady

covert, let me remind you of the Chinese fable. A traveller passing through a field was so annoyed by the incessant hum of grass-hoppers, that he alighted from his horse, to extirpate every one, without reflecting, that, if left to themselves, they would all perish in a day.

'Tis said, that insects have judicial rules  
Like man, "a long eventful history,"  
They have their plebeian and patrician schools,  
And human dread of aristocracy ;  
Their nation's *theory* is equal right,—  
Why then do beetles and mosquitoes fight ?

'Tis said the bee-hive has its potentate,  
And the wax-palace scarcely bounds its pride ;  
Its drones are not made ministers of state,  
Yet it has great absurdities,—beside  
A nation's depot for their treasured store,—  
Alas ! for man the "monster" to devour.

The spider has its manufacturing village,  
Where webs are woven of more kinds *than one*,  
Its "Reading-room" for literary pillage,  
And "Doctor's office," where long yarns are spun,  
Beside a tottering Justice, though a bold one,  
Two sweet infant lawyers and an old one.

And polities, among this tiny race,  
Rous'd all the elements of party strife ;  
And there was one, a squire, who lost his place,  
And crush'd forever his politic life,—

Because its structure had a clay foundation,  
And be a thorough-going anti-mason.

Yet still among the literary web,

With "just enough of learning to misquote,"  
He moved, a walking thought,—at least 'twas said,

He puffed and criticised, and "Sketches" wrote;  
And perch'd odd prose, thought Byron never intended  
Such linsey-woolsey should by him be mended.

And those of whom I write, like all society,  
Were formid of good and evil fool and sage;

Some of no fame, and some of notoriety;  
Some who could read, and some never turn'd a page;  
And yet they had a literary quorum,  
A Newspaper, a Library, and Forum!

There was a question case which they debated,

With "power of thought, and magic of the mind,"  
Until their very brains were excavated.

And but a mighty chasm left behind;  
The ~~few~~ question was, "If woman can  
Boast equal mental power with that of man?"

And one arose,—each pet thought of his brain,  
He hugg'd like a spell'd child, because his own.

And made to bow, and scrape, and speak opia,  
And show how very learned he had grown;  
Scattering, — *God bless a Roman!*, with wry faces,  
And murd'ring gesture and the three sweet graces.

I'll give a specimen of granite thought,  
That left its mountain-brow, and tumbled down

Its human precipice, while list'ners caught  
 Its wordy thunder,—'tis not very long,—  
 I'll here indite it,—“*for to*” crush forever  
 High-minded woman in each learn'd endeavor.

“ Man is the towering oak, around whose head  
 The glowing light of intellect may shine ;  
 Woman, the clinging tendril, seeks its shade,  
 Fett'ring its branches like a poison vine ;  
 Man's wit's the leaf,—woman's but the flower,  
 Man's has its season,—woman's but the hour.”

Then Patrick Henry's parody arose,  
 And echoed all his patron said before ;  
 His wave of emphasis unequal flows,  
 Now a faint *murmur*,—then a mighty *roar* ;  
 And then like summer streams, as softly stealing  
 As though it had not laved a single feeling.

But yet go on, there's fame within thy reach,  
 Give the mind's music but a loftier tone ;  
 O, sink the pupil, and henceforward teach,  
 Lean less on other minds, and trust your own,  
 Then hope, like Henry's, in debate to wear  
 As green a wreath as that which binds his hair.

\*       \*       \*       \*

O Cicero ! fling thy mighty mantle here,  
 And hide within its folds this simple truth,—  
 'Twas *study* bade the gems of thought appear,  
 And *perseverance* delv'd the mind in youth ;

Exil'd by talent, till the palm was won,  
I think I'm right,—if not see "Middleton."

KATY-DID.

The curiosity to know who was the author of this, was unbounded. The ire of some woman evidently was fully roused ; and, as it turned out, not only the poor debaters were made to smart, but the whole neighborhood had to pay. Having once begun, Katy-did would not be still. From behind her "leafy covert," she was heard, for weeks, chirping about their ears, going repeatedly round the village, and several times making a foray over the county, spreading astonishment and dismay wherever she went. No one was spared. Character after character was hit off. All the current gossip flowed afresh, and old jokes, long gone to their tombs, started into more pungent life than before, to scare their victims over again.

I have copied the above from a faded roll of newspaper scraps, in which only a few of the series have been preserved ; but even these are so full of local and personal allusions, as to require too much explanation before they could be quoted entire. Written off with incredible rapidity, they were only intended to amuse the hour, and to die when the frost came. Little was such a fate as this dreamed for them.

While all this was taking place, the unfortunate "Squire," the first to feel the weight of her "mental power," returned one day from the city with "blushing honors thick upon him." In a political speech delivered there, he had won for himself great applause ; and its echoes arrived before him, to confirm his rustic reputation. Hastening to do him justice, she can compare him to nothing less than the new luminary that had just been discovered.

## [ For the Republican Banner. ]

There 're surely planets Newton never found,  
Worlds that his telescope ne'er wandered o'er,  
He said, "the waves of truth were swelling round,  
While he but gather'd pebbles on its shore."  
We're thankful, that he did not pick up there,  
The "Georgium Sidus" of our hemisphere.

He shines no longer as a mere abridgment;  
For, in a glorious cause, his mind threw by  
Its tinsel cloak, that dubb'd it non-existent,  
(Whose warp was Law, and woof was *Poetry*,)  
And clothed itself with strength, and swept a chord  
That yet is vibrating,—in the Tenth Ward.

For there his eloquence has justly won  
The praise of *all*,—the true, the disaffected,—  
It might be such a welcome as the sun  
Met Monday morning, when 'twas *least expected*;  
But yet they cheer'd him, till applause lost breath,  
So says the paper of the twenty-fifth.

\*       \*       \*       \*

In the same piece, she introduces another member of the Club, the best speaker in it, and a great favorite with her. She would willingly have spared him, but his reserved and taciturn demeanor, and close devotion to his affairs in the Cotton Mill, piqued her into giving his dignity a sly pinch :

And yet we know another hidden star,  
Who, scarcely lending us a social ray,  
Will only flash upon us from afar,  
And hides itself in *cotton clouds* all day.  
Strange ! that an intellect of *conscious* power,  
Reserves its light for a forensic hour.

And strange, that o'er the flow'rs of mind will creep  
Such insect faults as mispronunciation ;  
That when thoughts stir his mind, as winds the deep,  
We're *drown-ed* in the midst of an oration.  
A few dark feathers on a sky-lark's wings,—  
Yet Angelo thus speaks of little things :—

“ What have you done ? ” said one, “ no change is made  
For days upon thy work ; ” — “ Spare the reflection,”  
Said Angelo, — “ I've soften'd every shade  
A trifle, — and yet trifles make perfection.  
And that's no trifle ” — Was he right ? Ask Fame,  
Where in her galaxy we'll find his name.

\* \* \* \* \*

The remainder of this is a succession of amusing, political personalities. The President himself does not escape, nor half-a-dozen aspirants for office nearer by ; for, recollect, this is the time when, to use her words :

The body politic is out of breath ;  
For like Sangrado, skill'd in pharmacy,  
Van-Buren is warm-watering it to death,  
And Jackson drains its vital currency ;

And “bone and sinew” weakens by the fetter,  
Though Tory nurses whisper it is better.

These exciting days have all passed away now; but not before they had proved too much for the animated little village, shortly after this paralyzing its energies, and leaving it in the helpless condition in which it now lies. It was the fear of such a catastrophe, that kindled Sophia's patriotic fire in the concluding verses:

But, rouse my country! canst thou take thy creed,  
The creed of Washington, and on the soil  
Where his own sword wrote Freedom! stand and read  
Of all the danger, suffering, and toil,  
That mark'd its hour of triumph, and then go  
A willing vassal to its deadliest foe?

If we have patriots left that scorn dominion,  
Hearts that are lit, the watchfire of the free,—  
A beacon-torch, not flick'ring in opinion,  
Whose light and essence *all* is Liberty!  
Fling by the *chain*, nor in the darken'd air  
Play with its thunders, when its lightnings glare.

And *Woman!* let thy sacred influence bend  
Over the stormy torrent, take its own,  
Its warring purposes, and gently blend  
Thy nature with its elements; and zone,  
As with a rainbow's clasp,—all dear to thee,—  
And for thy children,—kneel for Liberty!

KATY-DID.

The secret was well kept. All this time, no one sharing it but the four sisters. Even their father went about, innocently con-

doling with the victims, and well pleased at seeing some of his own pet ideas and asperities coming forth in such buzzing words.

There was a rival village a few miles off, directly opposed to this in politics, where a great meeting had just been held. After an excursion thither, she returns laden with the following :

[ For the Republican Banner. ]

I'm not a butterfly, upon my word,  
Not such a pretty day-light fly-away :—  
I'm not a nightingale, nor humming-bird.  
Breaking new hearts with music every day.  
I take the color of the times I light on,  
You will not know me from the leaf I write on.

I love my shady home, when sunset flings  
Its gorgeous drapery round my leafy chamber,  
Yet, tired of *statu quo*, I lift my wings,  
And round the neighborhood I sometimes wander  
To visit other towns, and list the notes  
Of politicians peddling round their votes.

'Twas Monday night, the fifteenth of September,  
('Tis best in party moves to fix the date,  
It serves a double purpose,—to remember  
The petty cogs that move the wheels of state,  
And flings a title on life's hum-drum pages,  
As they were born and stamped, for future ages.)

Then roar'd the cannon,—'tis Fame's lisping voice,  
Passion and feeling, merged in one dark cloud

Of *thundering sublimity*,—no choice  
But shelter, or a pelting, to the crowd,—  
O, blest invention of politic shanties,  
Where all may find a *place*,—except—the Antis.

Poor Pedagogue had there his speech by rote,  
By dint of study, and by oft repeating,  
He'd "taught the young idea how to shoot,"  
And whom to aim at,—in the general meeting.  
Here was a pun, and there a calculation,  
To patter on the Whigs of every station ;  
For Ped., we know, is an arithmetician,  
Can figure round a *foolscap*, and, he thought,  
With friends to aid, he'd put down self as *nought*,  
And carry *one* at the next town election.

\*       \*       \*       \*

I'll leave the party organs, and their bellows,  
For the home-music of the water-wheel,  
Our nerves auricular will shortly tell us,  
That nerves *all-factory* have a right to feel ;  
And nothing strikes them with such dread sensation,  
As *mingling colors*,—or amalgamation.

\*       \*       \*       \*

I omit a number of gay and witty fancies, too local to be now understood. In one of the communications that followed, which is now missing, she lashed a well-known personage of the place, so severely, that the Editor, fearing to publish it, postponed it, with the notice, that "Katy-did is under consideration ;" but afterward

printed it, with his own bungling alterations. Her keen ear could not endure the discordant lines : and Crito himself comes under her ready rebuke :

But "Katy-did's under consideration."—

Thus did you frown upon my humble strain.

And editorial deliberation

May clip its metre, and its sense again.

I hate to have my *thoughts*, and *rhyme*, and *words*,

Like fruit, peck'd off, by editorial birds.

Perhaps I was severe, and shook the earth

Too roughly from a *diamond*, in my zeal :

"Pray, pardon all," unconscious of its worth.

I tried its *temper* with a point of steel.

Great minds will sometimes feel a little thing,

As huge Goliah perish'd by a sling.

KATY-DIDN T.

Her fun was now ended ; and, having remained unsuspected in her covert so far, she makes the mutilation to which she had been subjected, the occasion of the following graceful retreat. In some of its fairy imagery, we may see the influence of her favorite, the "Culprit Fay." She alludes prettily to two of her fair friends in the village, and concludes with a legacy of good advice to the sage Crito. Until now, her vigorous and earnest way of dealing with the questions of the time, had created doubt, whether a woman could be the author ; but, in the feminine allusion to "our curls," in this her farewell, she inadvertently let out so much of the secret, amid a roar of applause.

## [ For the Banner. ]

Sadness broods o'er the insect world to-day;  
'Tis whispered, that I've nearly chirped my last;  
There was a touch of sorrow in my lay,  
A slight decline observant: and though past,  
I feel a dull poetic rheumatism,  
Caught by exposure to a criticism.

Perhaps it may be so: we cannot bind  
A tempest or a temper; both will blow.  
This spoils our curls, that discomposes mind;  
But yet I hate such wit as Devereux  
Says, "whistles through a key-hole;" give a breeze  
That bears us Nature's wealth,—fruit, flowers and leaves.—

A stout nor' wester, one that shakes the trees,  
E'en though it spoil me of my summer glory.  
The wretch may toss my hammock to the breeze,  
And tear the rafters from my attic story;  
If rough, 'tis honest; and if wrong, it dares  
Betray the wrong,—nor mimics softer airs.

My "acorn" chariot's waiting at the door.  
O'er "fire-fly" steeds the cobweb rein is thrown,  
My drab-coat "miller" coachman snaps once more  
His whip of grass, and lash of thistle-down,  
And many a "four o'clock" (such time we keep.)  
Has clos'd its eyes, an hour ago, in sleep.

Yet as the year, while gath'ring up its leaves,

Its golden treasure, sighs o'er every one.

And leaves a few to flutter on the trees.

To tell of summer when the summer's gone;

Thus I, though few will miss my chirpings here,

Yet to those few must leave a "Souvenir."

The little "lady slippers" that I wear.

Within our prettiest village garden grew

I fitted them one day while wand'ring there,

And buckled them with studs of morning dew:

These with my spangled deshabille of green,

I leave our fairy-footed Village Queen.

The "cloak of butterflies" I wear from home,

My zone of "ribbon grass," and "pink" brocade,

My "violet" bonnet, with its hum-bird plume,

And its own veil of gossamer,—to shade

A blue eye, drooping 'neath a lid as fair

As "lily of the valley" cap I wear.

To "Crito," my Port-folio, rose-leaves bound

In the rich velvet of a "fleur de lis,"

Whose ink was shower drops, and whose pen was found

Wing'd in a blustring, stingless bumble-bee;

And on one page a hint, and kind good-bye,

And then,—a long adieu to poetry:

Tis yours to fling your "Banner" to the wind,

To float an empty, idle, flaunting thing,

Or bid it flutter o'er the realms of mind,

Starlit and brilliant as the Evening's wing;

A standard round which classic thought will flit,  
Or vulgar ensign for each scribbling wit.

Let Satire, when she points her shaft of steel,  
Be polished glitt'ring, when she lays us low;  
Wounds from a rusty falchion never heal;  
Like Sitgreaves give a scientific blow.  
Let each stroke fall, as schooled by Sheridan,  
And rear your columns as Corinthian.

Study Phrenology, that potent science,  
'Till fingers, like the willow-wand, discover  
Through countless strata of alluvial sense  
The depths of all those mighty streams, that wander  
Through the mind's caverns, bringing thoughts to light,  
That else had gurgled in a moonless night.

Then choose some Alpine head, where bump o'er bump  
Rises in Spurzheim majesty sublime,  
Where all is natural, and not a thump  
Tells of the tilts and tournaments of time;  
Then loose the satire,—let the glacier fall  
On medium wits, and avalanche us all,

### III.

## THE LIKENESS OF THE INNER FACE.

IN this merely outlined portrayal of the sportive and brilliant girl, just as she appeared to those who saw her in the world, it was not intended to imply, that there were no deeper characteristics, all that time, in play. Within, she had her own private world. Her ardent and impressible mind had entertained many a glowing thought; her plastic disposition had very early been touched and ennobled by the moulding influences of religion; and her sensitive, high-strung spirit had not escaped occasions of severe trial and unhappiness. Many a poem, hereafter to be introduced, was written during the same years in which she chirped her “Katy-did” and Katy-didn’t.”

All this was well known to those who knew her best. But in presenting her to those who did not know her, and by whom I would gladly see her appreciated, it seemed the better way to follow the usual course of friendship, and reveal a charming and gifted woman just as she always revealed herself: at first, simply bright, attractive, and dazzling, but afterward manifesting

ever-deepening qualities of mind and heart, that shot their electric light as deeply into the mind and heart observing her. As she did in life, so can she be made to do now; only, in place of the propitious opportunities that usually open the heart to a friend, I will endeavor so to group these lays of her lifetime, (not in the order of time, but appropriately to certain circumstances,) that her nature will appear gradually to expand, and beautify itself, and a feeling be created as of a progress in becoming acquainted with her.

There occurred an interesting event, in which this sparkling superficies gives way at once to a vision of an inner and finer face. A wedding rises on the scene. She one day put this period to all romance; and I find her, about the same time, alluding thus playfully to her satisfaction with her choice: "My light head wants a ballast of discretion, judgment, etc., etc. Who knows but that his thoughts, and the volatile particles of mine together, will produce the same effect as glass and quicksilver, which apart, are dissimilar, but which united, are good for every day reflection; attracting the beautiful, and all that is worth attracting?" I need hardly pause to record how happily and devotedly her being henceforth redoubled itself, in one who through life returned, most truly and ardently, the wealth of love she gave.

Now she developed the woman indeed; and what a phenomenon woman's nature presents, when she becomes a wife and a mother! She is immediately born again into a more vital existence. Affections and sympathies, before unknown, now appear in manifold beauty within her. Love for her husband first wells up richly; then love for her children bursts forth, like so many fresh springs, from the hidden places of her soul. Her nature becomes variegated with the new characteristics that play and glow upon it.

New energies are felt, and hourly increase. New duties discover themselves, and press her with their high urgency. Life dawns in its great reality, with all its scenes most deeply, vividly, warmly tinged.

There is another and final perfection, most rarely added to this new being, but which, when also given, re-invests woman with a romantic beauty, no longer human but divine. It is the central, glowing light of a poetic mind and temperament, radiating through all, and glorifying every thing around it, as with the hues of Heaven. Such a womanhood, with this its angelic crown, will be accorded to Sophia. Her affections and imagination palpitated together, like two life-streams circulating within her. One ever rehearsed the motions of the other. Every thing she saw, and felt, and thought, was touched with the glories of this inner light, that was ever shining through the crystals of her heart.

A group of lovely children soon gathered about her feet, and each one, as she clasped it to her breast, she also embraced with this higher maternal instinct of her soul. Beautiful was it, to see the fair, young mother gazing so wonderingly into her childrens' eyes, and beholding such mysteries there. Listen to her glad and dulcet musings over one of these little ones, whose soft breath and life, just beginning to mingle with her own, began also to fan and move the tender senses of her fancy. The passage is taken from a letter to her Mentor-uncle.

" My summer has passed like all my anticipations, with its promises but half-fulfilled, unless I except a sweet little Essay on Human Nature, which I have but lately received from its Author: and as it is published, I suppose I may, in newspaper language, give you a description.

" It is a beautifully bound duodecimo, whose transparent cover-

ing would remind you of an unclouded morning, when it wakes on a shadowed world ; or if fancy may emphasize reality, we might believe the changing blushes of “Nourmahal” were imprisoned under its surface ; and yet this is but a veil which Life, that skilful artist, has drawn over two roses that almost wave beneath their cover, and which are copied from an exquisite original in the Louvre of Heaven ; and if you have ever looked on the frescoes of sunset, you would at once recognize their claim.

“ Above these, two deep blue I’s (that in Roman character would designate it as the second volume) are surrounded by an expressive vignette, emblematic of affection, good-nature, and intelligence ; and, unlike the gay volume of many a family library, there is not a particle of *gilt* in a leaf that I have turned ; but its pearly pages are of the same transparent whiteness as its *tiny clasps*, whose rosy tips might tempt one to believe a sunbeam had chiselled them from a cloud.

“ The motto of its title-page is written in smiles ; for, they are the golden letters in the orthography of angels, and is simply characteristic of its Author,

“ Of such is the kingdom of Heaven.”

“ It has been often reviewed, and ever in kindness. Some of the sweetest reflections I have ever seen, were on this subject ; and all at least award me the school-girl’s laurel ; for my pretty volume is neither dog-eared nor disfigured.

“ It is a work of mystery ; for months I have hourly perused it, and yet I have made but little progress in those hieroglyphics which are the sentences of its destiny. I can but trace the A, B, C, of feeling which after-years must syllable ; I may *point*, but God must give its true emphasis, that sweet may be the intonations of its character, and every *period* of life musical at its close.

"I have said, that it is a volume of mystery : of mystery, indeed ; for it is written with the phosphorescence of eternity, and can only be discovered by those passions which the future must kindle. Providence will hold them to the flame, and human love must weep or glory in the development.

"But who can appreciate the intensity of interest, with which I catch at each *expression*, and rest my conclusions on the most trivial evidences of mind ? Morning has found me at the task, and midnight, bending over it, unwearied by the study ; and it is strange, but I never turn a page, nor discover a beauty, that I do not feel as if an angel folded its wings, and was absorbed with me in its contemplation : and at night, when its lids are closed, and I draw it nearer to my heart, it is the very prayer of my bosom ; a flower, winning by its own loveliness the sunshine and the dew of mercy."

Such a keen instinct for the beautiful in her children, could not but add a thousand-fold to the strength of her love for them. The influence of the same high gift appeared, also, in every thing else. As it made her enjoyments most vivid and intense, so it gave her a capacity for suffering which few can understand. Her whole lifetime comes before me, with this thought. Her marriage ushered in her destiny, as well as deepened her nature ; and I see her standing in the opening of that vista, with a heart so quick to feel the weight of a woe, as well as the fulness of a joy, and quivering, as the chill atmosphere of succeeding years touches her with adversities, disappointments, bereavements, and agonies, almost innumerable.

In contrast with the above joyous, hopeful strain over a child just born to her, hearken to the wail she utters, in the first of the following group, over one whose breath and life are ebbing away from her,

## TO A DYING INFANT.

COME to me, dearest ! lay thy head  
Upon thy mother's breast ;  
And lift those sweet, blue eyes, and smile,  
As if thou lov'dst its rest ;  
For it is midnight with my heart,  
And ev'ry star that shone  
So brilliant in life's firmament,  
Is waning, or has gone.

My God ! I would not pine at aught  
Thy justice should decree ;  
Yet spare this flutt'ring leaf, that hangs  
Upon a blasted tree ;  
For she is life's Æolian harp,  
And, as its storms rush by,  
Draws music from its tempest-cloud,  
And sweetness from a sigh.

Father of mercy ! many a pang  
Has passed this aching brain ;

O, tear not Thou another link  
From feeling's broken chain !  
In prayer I've asked submission still,  
To say, "Thy will be done;"  
But like the sea-shell far removed,  
Love murmurs for its own !<sup>3</sup>

There's not a joy e'er sprung for me,  
But withered where it grew ;  
And not a hope has sunned my path,  
But left its shadow too.  
Is it from evil days to come,  
That Thou would'st take my child ?  
And win for its eternal home,  
The pure, the undefiled ?

O Father, from that better land  
That faith has shown my heart !  
Thy spirit comes at earthly call,  
Submission to impart.  
Pure falls the snow from yonder cloud,  
And pure my child shall be ;  
A snow-flake death *may* sweep from earth,  
So it but drift to Thee.

## THE MOTHER'S PRAYER.

WRITTEN FOR THE MATERNAL ASSOCIATION OF WALDEN.

O, HEAR us, thou Eternal God !  
Thy Son life's darkened path has trod,  
And while we for our children plead,  
O, let His mercy intercede !  
It is not earthly joys we crave,  
The verdure that could hide a grave,  
The gilding of a little clay,  
For care or death to wear away.

We ask for grace, to lift each thought  
To Thee, from whom its power is caught,  
Each link of the Eternal mind,  
From earth unclasped, to Thee resigned ;  
Coiled is the chain, corroding here,  
For life hath sighs, and death a tear ;  
But stretched to Thee, 'twill span the sky,  
And fold Thine own Eternity.

Like that bright stream whose waters glide,  
Unmingled with an adverse tide ;  
O, thus, from earthly passions free,  
May ev'ry feeling flow to Thee !  
Though Death may have the tempest's power,  
To gather from the heart its flower,  
The blast that leaves our bosom lone,  
Shall place its blossom on Thine own.

And, mother, if thou ere didst start  
From dreams to clasp it to thy heart,  
Forgetful that the cold earth piled  
The pillow of thy buried child,  
While ev'ry thought by grief subdued,  
Turned to its own deep solitude.  
And sought, from sympathy apart,  
The darkness of a shadowed heart ;

If thou dost know what 'tis to feel  
A Saviour's accents o'er thee steal,  
In that sad moment whisp'ring thee,  
“ O, suffer them to come to me ; ”  
Then, by the voice that won thee back  
Again to tread life's rugged track,  
A wand'rer mid its light and shade,  
To meet its duties undismayed ;

O, trust the mercy that has given  
Thy heart its *Hope*, thy child a *Heaven* ;  
That, while thy soul with grief was bowed,  
*Wove its bright promise in the cloud* ;

The lily, when the storm-winds sweep,  
Will blossom calmly on the deep,  
And, Saviour ! from life's troubled sea  
Shall prayer its wave-flower spring to Thee.

## BY-AND-BY.

## I.

BETTY has mother's touch he stood,  
All bathed in tears, her blue-eyed boy;  
While round on floor and chair, were scattered  
Neglected book, and broken toy.  
"O, mother! all the flowers are dead!  
And winds are low, my life can't fly."  
The mother kissed her boy, and said,  
"Twill all be better, By-and-By."  
  
"But, mother! when that day shall come,  
Will roses always stay in bloom?  
And the warm summer winds be high?  
Dear mother, when is By-and-By?"

## II.

Twas but to soothe,—an idle word.  
Yet it was gathered to his breast:  
And Hope, life's earliest singing-bird,  
Of lightest straw will build her nest;

And hov'ring o'er his heart again,  
A withered, leafless thing seemed now :  
'Twould do to perch upon,—but then,  
The Future was the *foliaged bough*.

He scorned the Present,—longed to climb  
The distant Alp of future time ;  
And trod the *actual*, but to sigh,  
“ Dear mother, *when* is By-and-By ? ”

## III.

And thus beguiled, the present hour  
Was worthless to the dreaming boy :  
Thought rushed through life, by rock and flower ;  
To swell the distant wave of joy.  
Years past,—again in tears,—he lay,  
Beside his mother’s lonely tomb :  
The mile-stone of a dreary way,  
'Twixt travelled life, and life to come.

It pointed from the trodden past,  
To truth’s most simple path at last ;  
And Present, Past, and Future showed,  
As windings of the self-same road.

## IV.

He rose,—a moment’s pause he stood,—  
A flower had twined that cold grave-stone :  
Root, spreading branch, and cradled bud,  
A trifold nature veiled in one.

That flower his primer ! gave his mind  
This lesson with instruction rife :  
Past, Present, Future are *combined* ;  
Who wins the Present, conquers Life.

'Tis present duty circles soul,  
Whose round from Heaven to Heaven must run ;  
*He* trod the cirque, he neared the goal,  
And ended life, where life begun.

## v.

He conquered—and the victor lay  
Beneath the church-yard turf asleep ;  
And holy men drew near to pray,  
And loving eyes were there to weep.  
What ! weep ye o'er the slumbering brave,  
The hero, when the battle's done ?  
Who conquers life, subdues the grave ;  
And, Death subdued, all Heaven is won.

Then leave the conqueror to his rest,  
The Past upon the Future's breast,  
Both Omnipresent, and on high ;  
Trust God to wake him BY-AND-BY.

## THE THUNDER SHOWER.

## I.

FLOWERS died upon the Summer gale,  
For sultry was the afternoon ;  
And daylight looked so tired and pale,  
'Twas watched o'er by the harvest moon.  
And weary as the day, Marie,  
Half resting on her mother's knee,  
With o'erflushed cheek and drooping eye,  
Impatient threw her bonnet by.

"O, dear mamma ! when you were young,  
Were Summer days so very long ?  
And could you read, and could you sew ?  
I'm sure *I don't know what to do.*"

"And yet, Marie," her mother said,  
And pointed to their latticed bower,  
"Beneath this honeysuckle shade,  
There's scarce a ray to vex the hour."

"O, could we only give the soul  
A trellis, as we did this shade,  
The heart might find 'neath self-control,  
A climate that itself had made."

## II.

“But, mother, what is self-control?”  
“That power, my love, by which we bind  
The wandering feelings of the soul,  
To grow more beautiful confined ;  
'Tis ACTION disciplined by thought,  
'Tis WILL subdued,—and CONSCIENCE taught  
The power, when impulse oft would soar,  
To cage the bird, and shut the door.”  
“O, now I know,” exclaimed Marie,  
“'Tis Natural Philosophy ;  
They always teach it at our school.  
But, mother, will it *make me cool?*”  
Ah, lady, now thy counsel keep,  
'Twere well were feeling thus confined ;  
But every day new tendrils peep,  
That every day must pause to bind.

And see ! across the waves of heaven,  
The freighted clouds move to and fro ;  
Sad wrecks ! they'll strew the shores of even,  
And dash their life-drops far below.

## III.

The thunder treads the air,—and now  
Its gloomy shadow sweeps the ground,—  
And tossed from off its ebon brow,  
Its lightning tresses fall around.

“ And see !” delighted, cried Marie,  
“ How the bright lightning springs to me ;  
From yonder cloudy cliff it came,  
And now,—I almost catch the flame.”  
The mother turned,—she saw the fire  
Clasp trustingly the safety wire,  
Then glide to earth with thundering yell,  
And fall, as conscious that it fell.  
“ Look, mother !” said the fearless child,  
As yet unmindful, in her mirth,  
That mother faint, with terror wild,  
Pale as her robe, had sunk to earth.

Ah, lady ! could we give the soul  
A trellis, as we do the flower,  
The heart, secure, 'neath self-control,  
Would never dread a thunder shower.

## IV.

Day followed day, and sunshine rolled  
Its glory over earth and sky,  
And common things were turned to gold,  
By sunset's wondrous alchemy.  
And calmly breathed the summer night,  
Ere the storm's clouded wing drew near,  
Waned out the moon's soft astral light,  
And many a starry chandelier ;  
It came at Nature's banquet hour,  
When fragrance floated on the breeze,

And jewels hung on every flower,  
And glittered on the dancing leaves.

Then, on the wall of heaven there glowed  
The lightning finger of a God :  
And ghastly grew the universe.  
As if it feared the Chaldeic curse.

## v.

Poor Marie trembled ; and her fear  
Had blanched her rosy cheek like pain :  
In silence, mother, wipe the tear.  
Example now, for precept's vain.  
No terror shades that mother's brow,  
The changeless lip is tranquil now :  
What power hath hushed her bosom's strife,  
And left its pulse at play with life ?  
She stood before the open sash :  
She knelt beneath the circling flash ;  
Clasped Marie's little hand and prayed,  
“ On Thee, O God, our souls be stayed !  
And while Thy lightnings round us dart,  
And fearful though the spirit be,  
O Father, soothe the trembling heart,  
And self-control be trust in Thee ! ”

Where was the cloud when morning caught  
The glory of the day, new risen ?  
With Marie's fear, and Marie's thought,  
Both lifted, and both lost in heaven.

#### IV.

### “THE ROCK, THE FALL, THE WOODED-WALK, THE RIVER.”

HER being expands again, most charmingly, over still other home-scenes of these years. They introduce her amid the sweetness and freshness of Nature; and while her home, in itself, illustrates her moral loveliness, these, its out-door scenes, bring into view a few phases of her being that have an affinity to them.

The village, with all its enterprise, had not encroached upon one bank of the river. It had spread itself over the broad slope opposite, leaving the cliffs on the side of her own “household hills” in much of their original wildness and beauty. The ancient homestead thus enjoyed the advantages of both. It was the cottage in the grove, spoken of before, and stood on the brow of a steep declivity, which was thickly foliaged with locust trees, from the top to the water’s edge. When the Falls were full, their deep tones were here distinctly heard: and when made inaudible by the lessening of the flood, their reverberations still lingered mystically in the low rumble of the trembling casements. The “Old Hearthstone,” with its double sloping roof, and broad piazzas, both in front and rear, flashed a greeting to the morning sun from its jutting dormer-windows, as he

rose above the heights over the river ; and bade him a golden farewell, when he sunk behind the wood-crowned hills, rolling upward toward the west. Its high-peaked gable of gray stucco faced the blue Shawangunk and Catskills in the north ; and in the opposite direction, beyond the deep gorge of the “ Kill,” the village lay scattered over the green uplands, to the distant “ church on the hill ;” and its white houses gleamed brightly through the trees on the lawn. It was further off than it appeared to be ; yet, over the intervening space, so wide that the river had room to curve, the sounds of the different Sunday bells came floating together, and had time to mingle their notes into one sweet chime of worship.

No less than thirty drives intersected the country round about : and as many rural walks crossed and recrossed nearer home. But, of them all, the “wooded-walk” was the finest. It was a broad blue pathway, so colored by the crumbling slate-rock, winding along the river-bank, beneath embowering evergreens, undulating inland, for a little distance, over the hillocks in the laurel grove ; and then, turning under the steep cliffs, with their thick shade of overhanging cedars, it led through a cool archway of foliage, till it reached and overlooked the waterfall and its rocky enclosure.

Here was the chief attraction. Below was the great flat rock, to which the visitors used to descend, in order to see the waters boil around them, and to catch the spray flung from above ; while, directly over their heads, a foot-bridge, made of half-a-dozen wires, hung bending across the chasm, vibrating in the wind, and under every passing step. This was the curiosity of the region, in a circuit of many miles. It was a picturesque object at all times, as it was seen from the ravine below spanning the torrent : but, at night especially, when its light materials were invisible, the effect was almost spectral, as the white draperies of those who were on it flitted to and fro, as of beings treading the air.

These are a few of the scenes amid which she loved to wander and muse while no one followed her ; and, in some of its sequestered spots, haunted only by the moonlight, and the dashings of the silvered river, she gathered many a thought, and wreathed the imagery of many a metred dream.

## THE WALLKILL AT WALDEN.

BENEATH long lashes of the drooping willow,  
Flash thy blue waters : and the cedar shade  
Bends from its cliff, above the rushing bellow,  
As if to guard the solitude it made.  
Here can we find a dial in the flower,  
What time the opening blossom flushed or fell,  
And mark at vesper, from its rocky tower,  
The deadly nightshade swing its purple bell.

There are high rocks above thy waters peeping,  
And the vexed wave sighs heavy to the shore :  
Yet many a foam-wreath o'er their rough sides creeping,  
Have touched with beauty what was dark before.  
Let the mind gather wisdom, ne'er to falter.  
Thus meet its incident, yet hold its power :  
And graceful yield to ills it cannot alter,  
Yet leave its sparkle on the darkest hour.

Winding through shade, or glancing by the meadow,  
Flinging the spray-bead over rock and tree,  
One cannot think that direful storm or shadow,  
Beautiful river ! ever rose from thee.

Yet many a cloud the morning sky embraces,  
Death, as a sunbeam, to its bosom gave,  
And still at night they come with pallid faees,  
And flitter ghost-like, o'er the trembling wave.

O ! who would ever think this tiny bubble,  
Pillowed on beams would float in glory there !  
Or swell the mighty aggregate of trouble,  
When gath'ring tempests shudder through the air ?  
And yet these very drops through ether driven,  
As tears may wander from the storm's dark eye ;  
Or tumble o'er the cloudy cliffs of heaven,  
Adown the thunder mountains of the sky.

O, it is strange ! Philosophy that traces  
The path of stars, the spray-mist from its wave,  
Resting on Thought, assigns to worlds their places,  
Yet sinks the mind that lifts it—to a grave ;  
Or probing earth, unveils its deep attraction,  
The secret balance that its powers control,  
And yet, denies the world of human action,  
The poise of God,—the magnet of the soul.

But darkness o'er the distant wood is creeping :  
The valley, couched in shadow, sinks from sight ;  
The mountain in its robe of mist is sleeping :  
And e'en my household hills are touned with night.  
Yet, ere I leave this shore, perhaps forever,  
Thoughts gathered here I'll yield it ere we part,  
A feeling stronger than the rushing river,  
And deeper than the veins that feed its heart.

Here has the morning talked to me of Heaven,  
As the wave flushed beneath its waking kiss ;  
And the soft fresco of the cloud at even,  
Shadowed a world more beautiful than this ;  
The Rock, the Fall, the Wooded-Walk, the River,  
The wild flower dangling from the cliff above,  
All lift the soul to Thee, Almighty Giver !  
And syllable to faith ETERNAL LOVE.

And as the spirit turns in adoration,  
Earth's varied page, the volume Mercy gave,  
Where thus bright streams italicize creation,  
With the rude emphasis of wind and wave,  
O, guide the *heart*, Creator ! lest Thy creature  
Read not *Thy glory* in the earth and sky,  
And, from the thrilling eloquence of nature,  
Translate Omnipotence as destiny.

All power is Thine, yet Mercy power is guiding,  
*Love infinite as power*, still guards its own ;  
As the dread tempest, 'neath a *ray* subsiding,  
Sinks to a breeze, and floats the thistle-down.  
Existence springs from Thee ! Thy glance all-seeing,  
The wide magnificence of heaven surveys :  
Yet turned to earth,—falls brightly on our being,  
As falls the moonbeam o'er the tide it sways.

A SUN-SET.

O, BRIGHTLY waves the green old tree,  
That in my childhood shadowed me :  
'Twas here, upon the grass I played,  
And here my little grotto made ;  
And decked it, for I loved it well,  
With gathered moss, and pearly shell.  
Save that the winds are talking now,  
To that old crone, yon blasted bough,  
Above, the same bright leaves are hung,  
Around the same broad shadow flung,  
That beckoned me when I was young.  
My children 'round me in their play,  
Are wand'ring where I used to stray ;  
Now o'er the brook, now o'er the green,  
Where pebble bright or flower is seen,  
And bring the trophies of their chase  
To deck my sylvan resting-place.

But, oh ! what memories intrude,  
To mar this peaceful solitude !  
Visions that life has hurried by,  
Its stern and dark reality,

The treasured words that here were spoken :  
The household ties that death has broken :  
The heart from ours that fate bid sever,  
Parted for years,—perhaps forever.  
Oh, who would live, till age shall steal  
The all of life save power to *feel* :  
To feel alone, in thought as years,  
A thing of sadness and of fears,  
A wreck upon time's loneliest shore,  
And washed by mem'rys billows o'er :  
Tossed to and fro 'twixt death and life,  
Rising and sinking with the strife,  
But waiting till a mightier wave  
Shall boom him onward to the grave ;  
His league with life so closely run,  
Scarce seems for him to dawn yon sun,  
Save as a wreck to glare upon.  
Doomed like yon blasted bough to wave  
'Mid the bright things of life, unblest,  
Touched with the death-chill of the grave,  
Without its hope for guerdon—*rest*.

Alas ! in reason's troubled hour,  
Such thoughts will o'er the soul be driven ;  
Yet, born beneath the thunder shower,  
The blossom bares its breast to heaven ;  
And faith looks upward from its grief.  
Though sown in darkness, nursed by fears  
'Till hope, unfolding like the leaf,  
Brightens from tears.

Beside our door there lingers one<sup>4</sup>  
Whose gaze is on the setting sun,  
As if its glory-beam inwrought  
His mind, and fixed the hue of thought ;  
Perchance his soul, in heavenly dream,  
Reads its own morrow in the beam ;  
And tranquil thought, like yonder ray,  
Is presage of a goodly day ;  
For he is old, and Death so near,  
That oft he starts his step to hear ;<sup>5</sup>  
Time rests upon his brow,—but then  
The tyrant *sways* but common men,—  
Years flung like storms a diadem.

Upon a dreaded height,  
The white locks drift around his brow ;  
Yet brightly o'er life's gathered snow,  
Mind lingers, and its sun-set glow  
    Bathes age in living light.  
With feeling chastened, not subdued,  
    Humbly the path of life he trod ;  
And life, and change, and solitude,  
    But taught his earnest spirit God.  
He read the Midnight, and His power  
    Its starry alphabet revealed ;  
And found Him, where the smallest flower  
    Traced His initial in the field ;  
His earthly sympathies o'crawed,  
Twine 'round mankind and reach to God.  
Children forgot that he is gray,  
    And frolic round him in their play ;

And e'en my infant turns from me,  
To rest upon that old man's knee.

'Tis beautiful! to see him there,  
With laughing lip his kisses seek ;  
Now playing with his silvery hair,  
Then leaning on his furrowed cheek.  
Beautiful age ! that thus canst twine  
Life's rugged rock, and freely gives  
Its bosom to the clasping vine,  
'Till desolation, hid in leaves,  
Woos life's young climber, tired, to rest,  
As mine, upon his aged breast.

"Come, father! speak of days agone,  
Those palmy days of mind that shone,  
So brightly, when 'M'Fingal's page  
Darted its lightning o'er the age.'"

Back rolled the heavy flood of time,  
And laves again his manhood's prime ;  
Again, his memory gathered all  
To which it clung in former years :  
Again he trod the Senate-hall,  
At home with his compeers ;  
Again, around his social hearth,  
Flashed wit, and repartee, and mirth,  
Those golden links in history's chain,  
Which only friendship can retain ;  
For veiled from sight will ever roll,  
The under-current of the soul ;

Full swells the stream to many a lip,  
But friendship ! at the fount may sip,  
True as the willow-wand to find<sup>6</sup>  
The hidden birth-place of the mind.

I had not marked the day-beams' flight,  
But now the dark-fringed lid of night  
Sinks heavy on the distant hill,  
And busy life and thought grow still,  
" And, O ! why linger thus my child,  
An old man's broken tale to hear ?  
Unless it be," he said, and smiled,  
" A classic taste for ruins, dear !"

Ruin ! the word sighed o'er his past,  
For life was tott'ring to its fall,  
And Mem'ry is a mournful blast,  
To sigh around its crumbling wall.  
'Twas but a moment ; faith had twined,  
So close, where joys had dropped away ;  
Its ivy clasp was round his mind,  
Another life waved o'er decay !  
Near fourscore years were there to tell  
Of tow'ring hopes, that rose—and fell,  
Though not an earthly prop was riven,  
But gave a broader glimpse of Heaven.

And yet 'tis ruin ! sad and lone,  
A Pharos of some Deep unknown,  
A trembling beacon, where this sea  
Just empties in eternity.

Aside, the links to life are flung,  
Its chain of hope is all unstrung,  
Brother of earthly life is gone,  
And 'mid the past he stands alone ;  
    Alone ! upon our sod.

And yet a noble structure ! mind  
Achieved the task by God designed ;  
God planned the temple, left him free,  
And faith has worked its destiny ;  
Life ! shaped its immortality,  
    Till life has imaged God.

My infant boy has sunk to rest,  
Upon his grandsire's aged breast ;  
    And folded in that arm,  
That kindly bosom throbbing near,  
Think you his spirit dreams of fear,  
    Of *ruin*, or of harm ?

CHILDREN IN THE CHURCHYARD OF ST. ——

"A simple child, dear brother Jim,  
That lightly draws its breath,  
That feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death?"

WORDSWORTH.

THE turf looks green on the churchyard mound,  
The elm's soft shade flickers over the ground ;  
And a troop of children have come forth to play,  
Where the freshest grass and the shadow lay ;  
Ah ! little they know of sorrow and death,  
And the ghastly world that is hushed beneath !  
As they skip 'round the graves, and come and pass,  
With a bounding step o'er the yielding grass ;  
Or singing and laughing, with childish glee,  
And chasing each other from tree to tree.

My heart's with my childhood ! mem'ry has flown  
To its early nest, by our old hearthstone ;  
It has flown like a bird from a blighted tree,  
To the greener joys that once waved for me ;  
It has borne me again to my own cottage door,  
'Neath its sweetbrier shade ; I'm a child once more !

On the broad piazza the moonbeams lay ;  
In the open casement the air-harps play ;  
From the locust grove comes an answering call,  
To a joyous voice from the echoing hall :  
And my mother's arms are around me now !  
Her soft hand presses my throbbing brow !  
I see her at morn,—at the hour of bed !  
When the prayer and the last good-night are said,  
And my lip is repeating it o'er and o'er,—  
I'm a child once more ! I'm a child once more !

But see ! they are wearied ! it's passed o'er them all,  
And now they encircle the old church wall :  
There, in the shade, half reclined on the ground,  
The lesson or story is whispered around :  
Some 'neath the elm's broad shadow are laid,  
Twining their locks with a grassy braid ;  
The dead all around ! and the living there !  
With the Spring's first gift in their glossy hair !  
One beautiful creature has gently thrown  
Her fragile form on an old tombstone,  
And she calls from her marble couch, " O see,  
*I've found the best place, 'tis the place for me !*"

O Memory, Memory, sad is thy doom !  
Come back to the tomb, O come back to the tomb !  
Come back to the loved, to the unforget,  
To this bosom, thy lonely burial spot.  
There rest the hopes that to ruin were hurled ;  
There griefs lie buried from all the world ;  
Fold thy wings o'er my heart, sweet Memory !  
For a tomb ! a tomb ! is the place for thee !

V.

## HEAD AND HEART IMPROMPTU.

HER poems are so self-descriptive, that it seems as if I were but etching illustrative pictures for her autobiography. They are full of her personality. We may hear her heart beat in them, and see its life-blood mantling and blooming over these her ideal lineaments. There was nothing of egotism in this. No one was less selfish or vain. But she wrote from an irrepressible impulse, with no thought of fame; simply because she could not help it. The measure and music of imagery in verse, was the natural, breathing movement of her soul.

It was not her will, but the circumstances of her career, that kept her imagination within these limits. The duties, anxieties, and occupations of a wife and mother preoccupied her. But even these would not have prevented her from occasionally attempting an outside theme, had not an unfortunate utilitarianism happened to surround her, discouraging that kind of authorship which craves appreciation. She had but few congenial opportunities; and as few friends, sufficiently undistracted by other matters, to estimate and animate her, even in that which she did. What we have, therefore,

is simply the accidental expression of her own personal emotions ; this habitual warm breath of her soul, as found here and there still in the exquisite shape it took, when it touched the frozen surface of things without.

The same reason assigned for their personality, accounts also for the pensive shade that overspreads them. She wrote from her innermost heart, and that was sometimes a very fount of melancholy. A woe, when it came, never spared her. It seized her sensitive spirit, and thrilled along its nerves in one pervading agony. Only a few were aware how keenly she often suffered, because the fact was veiled so constantly, by a bright, cheerful, even gay demeanor, partly the result of a conscientious resolve not to overshadow others with her own afflictions, and, partly, from the natural rebound of an elastic nature when diverted by surrounding excitements. The recollections of even those who were most familiar with all that saddened her, are most vivid as to these gladdening moments. Wherever she went, her amiable and vivacious ways, her pleasantry and glowing earnestness, her ingenuity in all the usual expedients to amuse the hour, made her the delight and favorite of all. In these times, she appeared as remarkable for her capacity to enjoy, as she was for her susceptibility to sorrow.

This spirit of gayety would often rise to displace even the anguish of physical distress. An instance of this is the following. One Christmas, the last of her life, a lady friend, an old schoolmate, who was visiting her, (and who, by the way, had been a witness of the prank described in her account of her school-days,) received a present of a box, with some promise in its appearance, but, when opened, found crammed with ludicrously disappointing articles. As the two were enjoying the spectacle strewn over the floor, and had, at last, guessed the author of the joke, she exclaimed, "Now

we'll have some fun!" and, though not an instant free from pain, and too helpless to hold a pen, she dictated these lines, to be sent back, which I copy as her husband then wrote them for her.

It was Christmas Eve: not a kind heart was near,  
As I sat by my hearth, 'twixt a smile and a tear;  
Musing over the past, and the years that had flown,  
On joys that still lingered, and all that had gone,  
When a rap at the door dashed the vision asunder;  
'Twas an Irish girl's *tap*, which is second-hand thunder;  
"Ma'am, a box at the door was left for you to-night,  
And the man did not *spake*, for he flashed out of sight;  
But I read by the lamp, and I read ver-r-y well  
To read such bad writing, 'twas for Mrs. P-ll."

"Set it down, my good Mary." Now who can it be?  
Who is left in this cold world to care thus for me?  
A Christmas box! though 'tis so careless without,  
Yet containing rich presents within, there's no dout.  
I lifted the cover, when, full in my face.  
With a flounce and *an air*, stared a cap of black lace.  
Next a purse with a guinea, what kindness is meant?  
God bless the kind donor! O pshaw. 'tis a CENT.  
Here are two pair of cuffs, well, I'll take them in charge,  
And try them on too. Alas! they're too large.  
Here are some pretty gifts, and a beautiful scarf,  
In a medley at which Heraclitus might laugh;  
Thus encouraged, with patience, still further I'll grope,  
Since, at last, my Pandora has yielded me Hope.  
Here's a tooth-brush, a hair-brush, and pins for the wrist,  
And ribbons, done up with a magical twist.  
A bottle of perfume, a *quantum* of paper,  
And a queer little man in the midst of a caper.

Well,—I'll sit by my die-away fire, and I'll pause.  
In my arm-chair till midnight, or find Santa Claus.  
So I thought o'er each friend, till at last I found one,  
Who loves to fold kindness forever in fun,  
Whose life brightens on, like the evergreen leaf.  
Unchanged through the solstice of joy or of grief.  
Who, when Fortune deals falsely, or friendship deceives,  
Flings her sorrows aside, as life's perishing leaves,  
And cherishing only the hopeful and green.  
Twines joy round her heart with the warmth of sixteen;  
Well, now to my couch: I've outwatched every cinder.  
And solved the enigma,—'Tis you, ETHELINDA.

With this, and one or two other exceptions, her poems, as here published, are the pictures of her mind in the seclusion of meditation and sorrow: more frequently the latter, written as a relief and solace. Thoughts which most persons would have poured directly into another's ear, she was content to improvise upon the keys of her imagination, when few were nigh to overhear, and only those few could know, that she was filling the music with the story of her very life. They, sometimes, are songs as heard coming from the embowering retreat of her own fancy, sweet, and fragrant with its fresh foliage and flowers; songs, often, as with the air and loftiness of psalmody, rising from the sanctuary of her hours of prayer.

From this habit of seeking refuge and consolation in the serener world of her imagination, and the strong literary tendencies thus indicated, it must not be inferred, that, as with many similarly gifted, her mind was also the idle resort of an unoccupied and purposeless life. She never was one of those who lived too much in their dreams. She turned aside, only for recreation, or when trouble was nigh at hand, but never loitered away from life and duty. Vital

and necessary to her as it was, poetry was never foremost. It was her breath, not herself. She felt the weight and momentum of her being, strong within her. She felt invigorated with a purpose, and always moved as if under the urgency of a work that was to be performed. Her nature had grown into a strength too real to be thus frittered and dreamed away. Home-life, with its fireside realities of husband, children, domestic cares, duties and employments, filled her heart, and glowed about her steps. To all this, poetry was incidental; as I say, only the vitalizing *breath* of this grander, practical character.

Here is a sweet picture of herself, after the close of a household day. While her husband and his brother, near by, are quietly enjoying their newspapers, she puts aside her work, to rhyme a playful greeting to a long absent and favorite brother-in-law.

It is evening, dear Sam, C—— and J—— are at home,  
And the bright lamp is cheering our dear "little room."  
And as J—— has one paper, and C—— the other,  
I have nothing to do but to think of my brother.  
My basket is near, but I'm sure I can't sew,  
So, needles and muslin, this evening adieu.  
I've been striving to-day, (like an excellent wife,)  
To blend both the useful and "dulce" of life.  
I've been pickling, preserving, and quite *in a stew*,  
Now, bothered by baby, then thinking of you;  
For, bee-like, a thought has stol'n over my brain.  
That you care very little to see us again.  
A *stinging* thought, Sam, which I'll crush if you'll come.  
And bring back the honey of hearts to our home.  
O! don't stay any longer; for poor Carlo lies  
On the door-mat, with naught to amuse him but flies:

And pen, ink, and books, undisturbed on the shelf,  
Refuse to be social with one but yourself,  
And paper looks blank, and our cheerfulness flown,  
For we feel as a *link* from our heart's chain had gone.

In this dull town of ours, I have little to "*tell*;"  
I've seen none of your cronies, but Mr. Ud——  
And him at the last evening's lecture I saw,  
Intent upon Solomon Southwick and law,  
When endeav'ring to prove that our judicial rules,  
Flow not from Athenian, but Mosaic schools.  
I loved that old man, for rev'rend's the form,  
That can meet wintry age unbowed by its storm;  
Though Time sits on his brow like a tyrant, and told  
A withering tale that such men *could grow old*;  
Yet mind grappled with years, unscathed by a care,  
For the greenness and beauty of Wisdom were there.  
Though the music of Milton flowed sweet from his tongue,  
He proved that more sweetly Isaiah had sung,  
And that Dante a rapture to *sense* might impart,  
But David, alone, swept the strings of the *heart*.  
And so calm was the flow of the lecturer's mind,  
His reas'ning so lucid, and thoughts so refined,  
That I rose from philosophy's ocean impearled  
With the gems of a purer and holier world.

Give my love to dear father and mother, and say  
I don't write such episodes every day;  
But you know, Sam, when nature and feelings are tired,  
The mind in *reaction* is often inspired,  
But the Pythian draught is exhausted, and now  
Dull slumber is passing her wand o'er my brow.

My pen and ink fail me, my senses are dumb,  
So I'll go to bed, Samuel, and *dream* you have come.  
Yet one word at parting; a blessing, a prayer,  
That life may be sprinkled so lightly with care,  
Like dust on the butterfly's wing, every woe  
May soften, not shadow, the brilliance below.  
But mem'ry is with me, a tear's in my eye,  
For my heart's with my childhood,—dear Samuel, good-bye.

This was the recreation of a few moments. But how happy she was, when she loosed her imagination for a higher flight. It seemed, at times, in the facility with which she wrote, especially after her thoughts had been enriched by long repression, as if she had but to touch her pen, and "the numbers came." Imagery occurred almost too easily, often leading her to crowd figures too thickly and too fast one upon another. As in the examples quoted above, she would frequently conceive and write on the instant; even in the midst of an expectant company, and the buzz of their conversation. She undervalued these so much, as to destroy a number of them; and most of the group here appended have been handed to me, by those who did value and so secured them. By placing them thus together, her mind is pleasingly displayed, with its lighter fringe of beauty.

In the compositions which follow this group, a glimpse is caught of her *heart*, radiating, beyond her family circle, into the thinner atmosphere of friendship, and especially in that most touching of all its expressions, the tenderness which appreciates another's grief. It was her practice, when a friend met with a bereavement, instead of inditing the usual, and necessarily superficial, note of condolence, to send out her own heart in verse, as it throbbed in imaginary contact with the occasion of the suffering.

These two kinds, really so dissimilar, I put together here, be-

cause of certain parallel characteristics : the one, a cluster of Improvisations, like sparks struck from the flint of passing incidents, showing the prompt and flashing readiness of her intellect ; the other, a cluster of Elegies, impromptus of the heart, revealing the quickness of its sympathies, and instant perception of all the bitterness of a woe.

## TO A FADED FLOWER.

IMPROPTU, WRITTEN AFTER A PARTY.

COME to my heart! in beauty come!  
Sleep on its pulse my withering flower;  
Thou'rt loveliest in thy fading bloom,  
And dearest in thy drooping hour.  
O, ever thus my spirit twines  
Round joys that soonest pass away,  
'Twas born to cling, like ivy vines,  
To ruin and decay.

Then rest thee here; this heart shall be  
Thy pure and lonely burial spot,  
The grave of feeling and of thee,  
Of hopes that share this blighted lot.  
Come to my heart! and if it moves  
With its wild pulse one faded leaf,  
I'll speak to thee, as one that loves,  
And tell thee of my grief.

I twined thee in my hair to-night,  
It was an hour of mirth and glee;

And many deemed my spirit light,  
But ah! the truth I'll whisper thee.  
They knew not, that the heart could fling  
A fragrance in its wounded hour.  
Like the faint perfume hovering  
Round thee, my faded flower !

Tell not the world, that grieves beguile  
The careless heart I'm wont to bear ;  
For when we know and scorn its smile,  
O who would ever ask its tear !  
Yet is it hard to hide my grief,  
And strive to veil the spirit's gloom,  
When I am like thee, blighted leaf,  
Within a world of bloom !

## IMPROPTU.

WRITTEN, ON RETURNING AN OFFERING OF BRYANT'S POEMS, BE-  
NEATH THE AUTOGRAPH OF THE AUTHOR.

DEAR lady, on this page is graven  
The poet's gift and line,  
And O ! 'tis wrong when thus 'twas given,  
To call the offering mine.

The humming-bird will choose its flower,  
'Mid summer buds entwined,  
And every poet hath the power  
To know his kindred mind.

For though each thought be like the chain  
Philosophy unfurled,  
Linking a moment life and pain  
Unto a better world :

I feel, that the electric fire  
Was never meant for me ;  
The flame that mantles round a spire,  
Will pass the wild-rose tree.

Yet memory hath her treasure spot ;  
Hid from the careless eye,  
Where, breathing of the unforgot,  
My sacred reliques lie.

There, far from human sight or praise,  
I love those gifts to bind,  
And disinter, on rainy days,  
Pompeis of the mind.

I cannot place thy gift with these,  
Though prized, it is denied ;  
As flowers we'd kiss, some charming breeze  
Forever blows aside.

Yet feeling still some trophy brings,  
Past kindness to recall ;  
For memory hath a thousand wings,  
And love can plume them all.

The vines that clasp our cottage wall,  
The stream, the rugged shore,  
The wooded-walk, the rock, the fall,  
O think of them once more.

For I am like the Banian tree,  
My heart is *rooted* there ;  
And wandering thoughts those branches be,  
That find a home elsewhere.

## IMPROPTU, TO NINA.

ON A FLOWER FROM HER FATHER'S GRAVE.

THY cheek, sweet girl, is yet too fair,  
Thy youthful eye too bright,  
For grief to fling a single care  
Athwart its gentle light.

The task is left for after years,  
When thou shalt turn aside,  
As many a thought shall trace, in tears,  
The hour "that father died."

When for the beggar at the door  
I heard thy young lip plead,  
"Oh, give her something, mother, more,  
*She says her father's dead;*"

I knew that life would turn that thought  
To tears, and bid them flow,  
When feeling to thy heart had taught,  
What is but memory now.

When years enfold the forest trunk,  
Its graven names depart,  
Yet lost not,—deeper they have sunk,  
To rest upon its heart.

Nor time can take the love from thee,  
Thine infancy revealed ;  
Though like the name upon the tree,  
From every eye concealed.

And often wilt thou turn from mirth,  
And all that life hath won,  
To train bright flowers above the earth  
That hides that buried one.

And be it so : and o'er thy breast  
When holy thoughts shall wave ;  
O, let their shadow gently rest  
Upon " dear father's " grave.

## IMPROPTU.

"I ONCE HAD FRIENDS, A THOUSAND FRIENDS."

"A THOUSAND friends!" a thousand friends! ah, that can never be,  
Though thousands sun thy path with smiles, their warmth is not  
with thee,

They glance upon the heart, but leave no kindly feelings there,  
To scatter rose-leaves o'er the soul, when tempest-shook by care.

A "chosen few," but few indeed; for they must love alone,  
Who fling beyond the kindred chain a link to more than one;  
When life is bright, we give them then its little all of mirth,  
And trust them thus far, fearlessly, and win them to our hearth.

But who would fling the love of soul, the foliage of the heart,  
Around a "chosen few," who place their hopes and love apart!  
Ah, rather let it cluster yet, luxuriant and alone,  
Or rear it like the prophet's vine, to shade the chosen one.

And when it withers, when it fades in sadness and in gloom,  
And the shrunk heart's a blighted leaf within a world of bloom,  
Then on my withering feelings lie, one dew-drop pure and clear,  
And *only one*, a glittering one. Beloved, give a tear.

## IMPROPTU.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF A VOLUME OF SERMONS.

O FOR a world that knows no care,  
A brighter, happier, purer sphere,  
Where sighs are lost in grateful prayer,  
And griefs forgot that wound us here.

I'd rather be a summer flower,  
A passing cloud, a fading bow,  
All, any thing whose life's an hour,  
Than live for years, and feel as now.

Yet all within us, all around,  
Tell of a time, when hearts shall break  
The "chain wherewith we're darkly bound,"  
And cease to beat, and cease to ache.

Had I the Christian's holy power,  
To gild th' horizon of my years,  
*Peace* yet should mark the passing hour,  
And only rapture speak in tears.

## IMPROPTU.

TO —— ON ACCEPTING A COPY OF ZIMMERMAN, BUT RETURNING A  
BREAST-PIN.

My bosom will not need this gem,  
To call thee to its thoughts again;  
For “Solitude” where’er thou art,  
Will bring thee to a lonely heart.

O blame me not, time cannot steal  
From hearts like ours the bliss *to feel*:  
To feel, though torn for years away,  
As if we parted yesterday.

Thought be the chain that binds thee here,  
My own bright gem, our *parting tear*,  
And that alone the pledge must be,  
Though even you should frown on me.

## THE TWILIGHT HOUR.

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

O WEEP, my love, when twilight's hour  
Has bathed in dew the violet flower :  
For, then the saered tear that's given  
Shall, with the dew-drop, rise to heaven.  
Brightly glowing, sparkling there,  
'Twill gem some Seraph's golden hair,  
Or rest upon some heavenly flower ;  
Then weep, my love, at twilight's hour.

Though now my heart be light and free,  
And buoyant as love's minstrelsy,  
Yet tears will dim the brightest eye,  
And sorrows robe its witchery ;  
And o'er the dewy lip will play  
Sighs which the world can't chase away :  
For though the heart may rest on flowers,  
The bosom has its twilight hours.

When the shades of sorrow stealing  
O'er the breast, its bliss concealing ;  
When joy but sheds its ling'ring beam,  
To east o'er woe that mellow gleam

That cherubs snatch from smiling heaven,  
To robe in light the clouds of even ;  
When sighs breathe sweets, tears rapture pour,  
The bosom has its twilight hour.

When dear hope gilds the clouds of sorrow,  
As token of a brilliant morrow,  
Sighs leave the heart, and dare to sip  
The fragrance of youth's balmy lip ;  
When mem'ry's dew, with blessings fraught,  
Freshens all the flowers of thought,  
When sighs breathe sweets, tears rapture pour,  
The bosom has its twilight hour.

But think you not, that beauty's sigh  
Will on evening's zephyr fly,  
And wander in ethereal blue,  
Beyond the regions of the dew ?  
There sweeping o'er some angel's lyre,  
Wakening joy and holy fire,  
Till Heaven's sweet minstrels own its power,  
And bless the sigh of twilight's hour.

'Twill play around some seraph's form ;  
But never, never, wing the storm.  
Sweet herald ! no : thou'l come at even,  
To bring us peace and love of Heaven ;  
Take from the rose its fragrant charm,  
Woo other sighs from beauty warm,  
Or bear from earth some lovely flower,  
That died to hallow twilight's hour.

## TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

“Perehance my harp and heart have lost a string  
And both may jar; it may be, that in vain  
I may essay, as I have oncee, to sing.  
\* \* \* \* I care not; so it fling  
Forgetfulness around me, it shall seem  
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.”

BYRON.

My brow will be changed ere we meet again,  
And the flush of my cheek be pallid with care,  
And thou shalt gaze on my dark lash in vain,  
For the joyous spirit that rested there.

Thou art gone,—we shall meet,—but not till years  
Shall have swept away, with their reckless wing,  
That freshness of feeling the spirit wears,  
Ere the blushes it wreathes are withering.

We shall meet. But TIME! Your cold finger flings  
Blighted flowers in our path for young life to wear;  
You will gather its wild imaginings,  
But what will you have when you take them? A TEAR.

You come! and the smile from the lip must part;  
You come! and passion must ebb at your will;  
You come! but oh, not to the troubled heart,  
To say to the flood of its grief,—“ Be still !”

There are tears, sad tears, for the eye to shed ;  
There are tears, for the hour of midnight prayer ;  
There are tears, for the grave of the early dead ;  
We gather enjoyment,—and tears are there.

They dampen the brow, ere the waving curls  
That shadow its whiteness, of age hath told ;  
While health on the cheek its banner unfurls,  
And hope is asleep on its crimson fold.

Thou art gone,—we shall meet,—but not till years  
Shall have swept away, with their reckless wing,  
That freshness of feeling the spirit wears,  
Ere the blushes it wreathes are withering.

## ON THE DEATH OF W. H.

INFANT SON OF J. H. S.

"WHEREFORE should I fast; can I bring him back again. I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." This is evidently spoken by the Psalmist, as a ground of comfort. The thought of going where his child had gone, consoled him under the present affliction. Yet it could have been no source of consolation to him, if he had not expected to meet and recognize his child again; but when he says, *I shall go to him*, we understand him to say, I shall *see* him again, I shall *know* him again, I shall *embrace* him again, and we then understand how he was comforted.

"Can the pious mother 'forget her child,' when she has laid its little form in the ground, and feels that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven?' Let her not sorrow as those who have no hope; *she shall go to him.*"—DR. DORR on the "*Recognition of Friends in another World.*"

Thou hast a home, my boy, above the strife  
And all the tumult of the changing hour:  
Yet what is earth without thee, what is life?  
The drooping calyx of a fallen flower.

Thy bird upon its perch is gaily singing;  
Thy books, thy toys, all home is filled with thee:  
Even thy pencil line the past is bringing,  
To touch the heart whose pulse is memory.

At morn I miss thee, when from dreams I start,  
As "dear mother" seems to meet my ear,  
Till grief is whisp'ring to my wounded heart,  
That death has left me nothing,—but her tear.

But most we mourn thee, when the shadows gather  
In the dim twilight round our lonely home ;  
The eye that watched the distance for its father :  
And the flushed lip that shouted, "He has come."

Thy Bible yet is resting on its stand,  
And calls the many hours when thou hast stood  
Close by my side, and as thy little hand  
Placed its slight mark, would question me of good.

Was it for death my love each thought was wreathing ?  
My mind a trellis to thine own I gave,  
For death amid its deep luxuriance breathing,  
To hurl its beauty to a sunken grave ?

There is a hush upon the clouded air,  
When the deep thunder rolls along the sky,  
And thus will feeling tremble into prayer,  
And gather calmness from intensity.

Till o'er its earthliness the spirit bending  
A bright horizon around dust is spread ;  
With finite love infinity is blending,  
And faith hath won its halo for the dead.

My heart dawned o'er thine infancy, while love  
Tinted the rose-bud that it lingered on,

And from the clustering shades of thought above  
The flower is fondly turning to its sun.

And it will turn forever. God is spreading  
That glorious shadow o'er my drooping eye :  
And every dream of thee that night is shedding,  
Falls like bright leaves from thine eternity.

Yet shall we meet, and heaven restore my own,  
Though but a sparkle 'mid its countless rays :  
Beauty that I may separate a tone,  
A cadence, from its thrilling hymn of praise.

Joy to my heart, thou'rt but a dew-drop lifted  
To swell the fount of happiness on high.  
A snow-flake from an icy world that's drifted,  
To melt beneath the smile of Deity.

## ON THE DEATH OF DR. S. C..

THE OLDEST PHYSICIAN OF THE VILLAGE, AND FOUNDER OF ITS TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

“DUST unto dust!” and to its God  
Earth has resigned the trust He gave ;  
Yet mem’ry shrines that burial sod,  
And marks it as the good man’s grave.

And mourn we o’er that buried one ?  
O, take the gathering clouds of care,  
And fling them round life’s setting sun,  
And lose them in the glory there :

Glory ! that needs no storied pen,  
For one who never asked for fame,  
Yet winning from his fellow-men  
The glory of an honest name.

Go learn it at the cottage hearth,  
And in the peace that hovers there ;  
And when night lifts the thoughts from earth,  
’Tis breathed, in blessing and in prayer,  
  
For him, that sought the erring soul,  
And led it from guilt’s darkened road,

Winning the tempted from his bowl  
Back to himself,—his home,—his God.

And even they, his kindness wooed  
But vainly from the cup of shame,  
Will yet by feeling half subdued  
In softer accents breathe his name.

For mountain rocks will show, when cleft,  
The impress of some buried flower;  
And in the hardest heart is left  
The record of its guiltless hour.

And yet with such simplicity  
Of heart, was action bound the while,  
That children fondly climbed that knee,  
To meet a welcome and a smile.

And when they heard his voice no more,  
In little bands I've seen them come,  
And point the stranger to his door,  
And whisper, "that was once his home."

He lived till age had crowned with snows  
His brow; yet, like the Syrian hill,<sup>\*</sup>  
Amid the waste of life he rose,  
And verdure clasped his bosom still.

He died, as dies the forest tree,  
Round which the deathless ivy twined,  
Scathed by thy stroke, Mortality,  
Yet foliaged with immortal mind.

## ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT SON OF E. G. S.

"The mother wept her first-born, for its little soul, like other tones, had been dissipated in the atmosphere of life. Death had breathed upon its butterfly being, and it rose from the world's tempestuous storms into the ever-peaceful ether; from the flowers of earth, to the flowers of paradise."—*From the German of JEAN PAUL RICHTER.*

DREAM of my bosom ! to the darkness stealing,  
Why didst thou come with such sweet prophecy ?  
To wander o'er the heart's ungathered feeling,  
And wake my love to smile on it, and die ?

When autumn winds are breathing round our dwelling,  
And sweep the last leaf from the forest tree,  
Oh, how does mem'ry, in our bosoms swelling,  
Bring back the death-hour that hath gathered thee.

What couldst thou win from earth, thou gentle spirit,  
That thy pure essence with its dust combined ?  
Joy ? that an unfledged soul could not inherit  
A loftier breathing of omniscient mind ?

Pain passed thy brow, and closed thine eye, when dying;  
Played with thy heart, and fluttered on thy breath;  
Dimmed the last smile that flickered 'neath its sighing:  
What couldst thou win, my boy, from life but death?

The cloud hath taught me, as its drop descending  
To earth shall filter through each rocky vein,  
With darker elements its nature blending,  
To flash a jewel when it's sought again.

Life's trial o'er,—my beautiful! from earth  
And from the grave's deep mine thy soul hath risen;  
And immortality from mortal birth  
Has linked it to the spirit gems of heaven.

## ON THE DEATH OF W. M. W.

WHO DIED IN A DISTANT CITY WHERE HE HAD GONE FOR THE BENEFIT OF  
HIS HEALTH.

ALONE to die ! the loved away,  
And none the tear to shed !  
No heart to soothe, or lip to pray,  
Or mourn for him when dead.  
While thoughts of home came but to shroud  
Its memory in gloom,  
Where was its loved, to ray the cloud  
That hovers round the tomb ?

Alone with death ! O who could blame,  
If even faith burned dim ?  
But holy thoughts like “angels came,  
And ministered to him.”  
They gently hushed the parting breath,  
Nor bade his smile depart ;  
Still lingered on the shades of death,  
That twilight of the heart.

And strangers too,—the kind, the good,—  
Drew 'round that fading eye;  
For, linked in Christian brotherhood,  
They saw a brother die.  
And prayer through Him who died to save,  
Each lip was breathing 'round;  
Prayer hallowed too the stranger's grave,  
And made it holy ground.

We bless them from our home afar,  
Though life be dark and lone,  
Yet o'er its night there moves one star,  
God's love that in them shone.  
Strangers! and yet for them has risen  
The spirit's grateful prayer,  
Unknown on earth to meet in heaven,—  
There are no strangers there.

## LINES,

SUGGESTED BY A DESCRIPTION OF THE DEATH-BED OF ——, WHO DIED IN  
THE TWENTIETH YEAR OF HER AGE.

COME from the world ! its wealth, its pomp, its power,  
Come from the glare of the unquiet day !  
To the lone hearth, where grief has touched the hour,  
With thoughts too deep to pass from earth away.

Come to the dying ! where fond hearts are bowed,  
As life's dim twilight gathers round the eye ;  
And as the soul wanes gently from its cloud,  
Learn how the young, the beautiful can die.

Gently that form, as if for night's repose,  
Hath sunk upon its couch ; and, it would seem,  
Past, Present, Future, all in beauty rose,  
And wreathed the mem'ry with their treasured dream.

The eye is shadowed, and the last, *last* tear  
From the deep fount of earthly love has risen :  
Yet, touched by faith, it hangs o'er human fear,  
A glittering covenant 'twixt earth and Heaven.

And words are stealing from the heart o'erfraught  
With its glad promise, struggling to be free,

A murmur, as the lifted wave of thought  
Dashes the shore of vast eternity.

“Father! I’m dying; yet, ere life shall wane,  
While my heart wrestles with its agony,  
*One* thought has snatched the victory from pain,  
My Saviour suffered more than this for me.

“Mother! upon thy bosom let me lie,  
Life placed me there, and there shall life be riven.  
Dear husband! father! kiss me ere I die,  
And brother, meet the one you love in Heaven.”

And this is Death: ’tis triumph! triumph sought  
And won from heaven on the bended knee,  
And see how brightly springs the dying thought,  
A cypress waving o’er mortality.

When the world laid its smile upon her heart,  
And its false hope, as with a spell, had bound it,  
Religion moved amid its depths apart,  
A gulf-stream warmer than the ocean round it.

Happy in life, she yet could dream of death;  
Beneath the shadow of a world in flower,  
Twine earthly sympathies with holy faith,  
And chasten daily action by its power.

’Twas mind enfranchised, springing from the strife,  
The creeping sorrows of this world of care:  
A silk-worm being, blending death and life  
In the same glorious winding-sheet of prayer.

VI.

## ECHOES OF FOOTSTEPS DEPARTING.

THERE is to me an indescribable beauty, in thus viewing a soul in the perspective of its own embowering dreams, especially when, as at this point, the vista begins to melt into the haze and mystery of the other world. Now comes appropriately the last and grandest aspect of all, and one never to be found in many a nature otherwise reaching broadly and distantly into some of the finest displays of human excellence. Religion is the golden glory which terminates this inner view. If the insight stop short of it, the background of a character can be naught but a cold vacuum ; if, on the contrary, it also appear, there is the end, and yet not the end,—a warm, rich-hued atmosphere, but fathomless as the eternity into which it leads, and with which it mingles.

This final phase of all character, as it appeared in Sophia, I have reserved until the final days of her life. Much of it has been anticipated already, in this introspection of her heart. All her musings are tinted, more or less, as were all her actions, with a religious light. In those that follow, the colors are only deeper and more

defined. I have chosen this, as the most fitting period for their witness, not only because of their vicinity in idea to the world to come, but because also the faith that inspired them, then shone in its greatest brightness; for, her career of many sorrows rose to a very climax of agony, just before her soul culminated into everlasting joy.

Her death was a romance of mental experiences. She seemed borne out of life, more by doom than disease. Unlike others, who are either struck down in an instant, or gradually sickened and wasted into the grave, she was touched with it in her maturity and bloom; and it lay like a tardy bane close to her heart, long before that bloom faded or her strength failed. The greater part of this time, she knew her peril, but did not realize, till much later, that her fate was sealed. Then, the sight of her nature, so full and vigorous, quivering beneath the shock of the cruel truth as it flashed upon her, with the thousand shades of fear and hope, and the endless revulsions of feeling that followed, made this peculiar spectacle of health in death, and death in health, appear drawn out into an almost dramatic length of struggle and suspense, till the catastrophe which came at last.

It had fastened like an asp upon her fair bosom, long before she knew it; and only when she found that it grew by what it fed on, did she seek riddance of the "mortal wretch." But the painless thing went on increasing, baffling every remedy, and sending at last the chill dread all through her, that it might be death. What an unconscious tragedy she wrote, in the letters that fill this period! I was handed the packet containing them, with the injunction, that they were too sacred for the public eye; and as I opened and read them, one by one, they seemed like so many successive scenes in a career perplexed and disheartened by the adverse turns of its destiny. I could see her, nearly all this time, moving yet in the ripe-

ness and beauty of her womanhood, in the vigor of an untainted constitution, with her mind in full-orbed brightness, with her children prattling around her, with her husband battling the world for her and them, with every thing to make life most vivid and precious, and to make her cling to it though it were even girt with fire. After that, I could see her, when it did become girt with fire, as the inextinguishable spark, that lay smouldering so long unfelt near her heart, burst forth at last, encircling it with flame ;—and then she did cling to life.

It was not unfaithful ; it was natural. Give faith and hope their utmost power, and they cannot annul nature. The more full and strong the life, the more it will shrink from death ; the wider and deeper its Banian nature has struck its roots, the more terrible is the torture of its plucking up.

These letters thus carry me back into those years, and I feel overcome by the inexpressible pathos of the story they relate : a sweet and devoted spirit, waiting so tearfully and hopefully, in her doubt and ignorance, and the dreadful time of suffering ever drawing near ! They commence with the first apprehension she felt ; and it is merely alluded to, amid the joyous messages of her heart to a distant and beloved sister. But, after this, I can see the shadows of her soul gradually deepening across each page ; even the chirography at last losing its vigor, and fading into the weak and trembling characters of a hand become almost helpless. Nobly, gloriously indeed does she unfold her being, through them all. It is pictured, in rising and falling hopes, in touching words of resignation, in bursts of deep affection, in expressions of the keenest sensibility to the mercies surrounding her, in the glowing exhibition, in every line, of a rich and manifold Christian character.

But I anticipate the brief narrative. Her physician becoming alarmed at the ill-success of his own skill, advised her to consult

Dr. ——, the eminent surgeon. He was sent for and soon called to see her; and how interesting she looked, as she stood in pensive grace before him.

After a moment's consideration, he turned, and, without a word, left the room. One of those present followed him, inquiring anxiously: "What do you think of my sister's case?" He looked back, his countenance full of agitation, and asked, "How many children has she?" Upon his re-entering the room, Sophia herself said: "Speak to me, if you please, with all the plainness that you would, to one of your own students. I have strength to bear it." He replied, raising his hands emphatically, "My dear lady, there is no hope for you." She listened calmly, and asked if an operation would not save her. "I will submit to it immediately, for my children's sake." Her case was soon after referred to a consultation of surgeons.

"Then, E——," she writes, "for the first time I seemed to realize my situation. Then I felt, that I was indeed ill, and, as soon as he left me, wept bitterly. Never did I have so dark an hour. \* \* \* I believe I do not dread the operation so much as the loss of time to my family, for they say it will be three months before I can use my arm after it. I feel well, and look, they say, well, and cannot but hope that I may again be well. \* \* \* For my children and dearest husband, I hope to live. Oh, they are the ties that come between my soul and resignation, and fasten me to earth. Oh, pray for me, my sister, that if this cup may not pass from me, I may be submissive." Shortly after, she writes again: "There is no longer any doubt. A consultation of surgeons have decided, that an operation can do me no good. \* \* \* O! the joy I felt, when I thought that dreadful operation would relieve me!"

Poor, sweet creature, how she clung to life! She did indeed

look well. Up to this moment, she was the picture of rosy health, and not a pang had yet crossed her bosom. Had she not reason to shrink from the sure abyss of agony yawning to receive her! It was so well understood that her fate was sealed, that, whenever she appeared at church, the minister offered the prayer for a sick person. To her sensitive spirit, it must have sounded like the opening of her own funeral service.

But a more vivid intimation was in store for her. In walking across the room one day, she suddenly fell insensible to the floor. It was the first cancer pain,—“the beginning only of evils,” said her physician. Then it came, that long rush of agony. In a few months, the cancer had redoubled itself, and began to cripple her right arm. I cannot forbear copying the first sentence of her last letter, written in a hand hardly recognizable : “I write with such extreme difficulty, that it will be only by great exertion I can make myself intelligible. My arm is in a sling, and I am forbidden to use it, but the wish to say a word to you, before it ‘forget its cunning,’ has made me transgress.”

\* \* \* Even now she does not wholly despair. “Yet I do not feel hopeless. There is a God who can say to me, even now, ‘Be thou whole,’ and my side shall be restored, ‘like as the other.’ ”

“I soon observed,” says one, “a change in her character. It was difficult to describe it. Every characteristic remained the same: the same tender, confiding disposition, the same disinterested affection, the same gentle submission, the same grateful appreciation of any petty sacrifice others were making for her, the same simplicity, almost *naïveté* of expression, and the same beautiful cheerfulness. Yet all seemed changed. There was a light resting upon them, which deepened and saddened all. Her whole being seemed bathed in the hues of Heaven. \* \* \* Heart and

intellect, in health ever refined, now appeared almost sublimated. The fiery trial through which she was passing, seemed already to have consumed the dross."

But long before her disease took its most cruel form, the more native traits of her character shone conspicuously. "I have days of pain and restlessness," she once said, "yet I feel cheerful, and at times so buoyant as to forget I have a

'baby at my breast  
That sucks the nurse asleep.'

as Cleopatra says. "In her hours of pain, she preferred being alone. "It would only add to my sufferings to see you sharing them with me." When her friends were admitted, so completely were these veiled, and all allusion to them avoided, that it was difficult to realize she had them. Her conversation would be full of its former brilliancy, the color would suffuse her cheek, and her eye brighten. They would say, "How well she looks," but, the moment the door was shut, her head would droop, her eye close, and the paleness of exhausted nature creep over her face. "They came from kindness," she would say, "it would be a poor return to send them away saddened. Why should they associate my sick chamber with gloom when it is crowded with blessings?"

I have here a bright impulse of her heart, as it was written to a young lady who one day left her some flowers:

A step in the entry, a knock at my door;  
"O, dear!" I exclaimed, "there's a Doctor once more;"  
I'm wearied to death, with the troublesome things.  
O! would I were dove-like, and only had wings,  
Or could creep to some spot where the summer flowers wave,  
And weave, like the silk-worm, my own little grave:

Content with the thraldom that Nature had woven,  
Till the wings should put forth, that would lift me to Heaven.  
Ah! life is Æolian, and Doctors can bind  
The loose harp-strings, and trust them again to the wind ;  
Yet, ere the sweet chimings of health are restored,  
A God must breathe o'er them, and tune every chord.  
“Come *in* then,” said I, though I felt quite *put out*,  
Nor dreamed you, sweet girl, what I pouted about.  
For you came, like the Spring to my bleak wintry hours,  
And left all your memory written in flowers.  
To the night of my heart, like a dream of its day,  
Or a link to a world that is passing away.

My task does not extend to a portrayal of those characteristics which she herself reveals. The beauty of her religious being, the earnest of

“The faith that grew brightest in suffering,  
The chastened spirit; yet cheerful the while,  
The broken heart, and the trusting smile.”

may be perceived in almost all her poems, but especially in these that I have gathered under the arch of this overhanging doom, like diamonds in the dark, to flash upward the light they once borrowed from Heaven.

## SUNDAY EVENING.

" When eve is purpling cliff and eave,  
    Thoughts of the heart, how soft ye flow!  
\*          \*          \*          \*          \*  
Then all, by chance or fate removed,  
    Like spirits crowd upon the eye;  
The few we liked,—the one we loved;  
    And the whole heart is memory."

CROLY.

My God, another day of Thine  
    Is added to the many given!  
O, has my spirit graved a line,  
    Its angel may record in Heaven?

Ah, no! but for redeeming love,  
    Sad, sad the page of life I'm turning;  
With sorrowing thoughts unknown above,  
    I linger o'er the woe I'm learning.

But touch my spirit, Saviour! give  
    Thy grace to cheer life's darkened pages;  
And bid my heart's crushed tendrils live,  
    Entwined around the Rock of Ages.

When mem'ry, like the ark's lone bird,  
Sweeps o'er the past, and asks its cherished,  
And only wins a look,—a word,—  
A few bright leaves that have not perished !

O, if the wearied spirit bring  
To Thee its hope,—to Thee its sorrow,  
Wilt Thou not smooth its ruffled wing,  
And guard it for a brighter morrow ?<sup>10</sup>

Till o'er this wilderness of care  
The waste of feelings, wronged and slighted,  
Shall all the holy dew of prayer,  
And lift from earth what earth has blighted.

In happier days, in sadder hours,  
Such trusting thoughts to Thee have risen ;  
Thoughts that have sprung life's desert flowers !  
Unseen by all,—yet watched by Heaven.

## THE CONFIRMATION AT ST. ——

"Granting us in this world knowledge of Thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting."—PRAYER-BOOK.

THEY come ! they crowd the altar ! and aside  
From earth, Heaven claims the consecrated hour ;  
The soul has dropped its vanity and pride,  
Life's outer leaves ! the spirit is in flower !  
And bends to Thee, O God ! as to its sun,  
Yielding its fragrance, as it's shone upon.

Childhood with pleading lip ! the prayer of youth  
That hath a hold on Heaven ! that is so pure,  
So full of confidence, and hope, and truth,  
And clings with such fond energy, as sure  
Of its protection,—and the gentle tone  
Of woman ! asking strength beyond her own.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

If from the tumult of the ebbing past,  
 A wearied one here sighs to be forgiven :  
 And 'neath the shadow of a life o'ercast,  
 Renews its earliest covenant with heaven,  
 And at this altar, Lord, on bended knee,  
 Forsake his idols, and bow down to Thee :

Speak ! as from Sinai,—from his sorrows rude,  
 Let suffering flash conviction ! If his climb  
 Hath been to Thee, in each vicissitude,  
 And thus, grief-sandalled, worn a path through time,  
 Even to this altar, there the cloud be riven !  
 Part the “thick darkness” with the Laws of Heaven.

The Prayer-Book in each hand ! the truths that stole  
 Around them, as the Spirit's breath each day,  
 Rush to the memory, o'ersweep the soul,  
 Burn on the lip, and “teach them how to pray ;”  
 From youth to age, from age to death, thus bear  
 Heaven's glorious passport, in that “Common Prayer.”

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Circling the Gospel page, it ever moves,  
 With all its gathered beauty, Lord, round Thee ;  
 Round Thee, its glorious centre, it revolves,  
 Thou art its light !—its life !—its energy !  
 And balanced by Thy Word, (“Thy Word is truth,”)  
 through time  
 It holds its course unfaltering and sublime.

O, when a false world smiles,—my Prayer-book!—thou  
Art nearer than the world; if 'neath its glare  
My purpose faint, thy page recalls my vow.  
In “Confirmation” registered,—and there  
Sheltered and saved! I bless the gourd that sprung  
A shadow 'twixt my spirit and its wrong.

## THE CHRISTMAS GREEN.

"And the glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my Sanctuary."—ISAIAH, lx: 13.

FROM the leafless wood we have gathered the pine,  
And the hemlock branch, and the winter vine ;  
And the laurel hath sprung from its frozen sod,  
To wreath in beauty the House of God.

For this, the fir-tree and box shall wave  
A leafy wing o'er the holy pave ;  
Round the sainted altar the wreath shall fall,  
And the holy cross on the hallowed wall.

For this, the cedar its leaf unfurled,  
And hung in shade o'er an icy world ;  
And we strew thy path, O Saviour ! now,  
With the living green and deathless bough.

'Tis our Hosanna ! a voiceless prayer,  
Feeling, that language can never share ;  
'Tis the silent worship of heart to Thee,  
And this is its bright orthography.

Death touched our home, and the spirit grieves,  
Its loved have passed with the summer leaves ;  
Yet, brighter thoughts crest the surge of woe,  
Worked white from the turbid depth below.

A thought of Heaven ! a trust in God !  
The faith that springs from its darkened sod ;  
A winter vine, that the *storm* hath traced ;  
God's autograph on a blighted waste !

For this the fir-tree and pine shall wave  
A leafy wing o'er the holy pave ;  
Round the sainted altar the wreath shall fall,  
And the holy cross on the hallowed wall.

## THE DREAM OF M. F. G.

"I know that the angels are whispering to thee."

"God bless, me, and make me a good girl."—AMEN.

LITTLE MARY'S PRAYER.

THOU art so like a dream of heaven,  
That still thy visions seem,  
Like that phenomenon of sleep,  
A dream within a dream.  
And pure the words that mem'ry brings,  
To noise thy dreaming hour,  
The butterfly has closed its wings  
Upon a lily flower !  
"God bless me, make me a good girl."—Amen.<sup>11</sup>

Not such a dream by slumber thrown,  
When grief's rough swell is o'er ;  
The ebb of pain, the after-moan,  
The surge upon the shore.  
Thy prayer is but the echoing  
Of waking peace and love,  
The rustling of the spirit's wing !  
The cooing of its dove !

The roses of the Persian field,  
With all their wealth of bloom,  
Are crushed, though thousands may but yield  
A drop of rich perfume ;  
And thus the heart, with feeling rife,  
Is crushed, alas ! by care,  
Yet blest if suffering wring from life  
The ottar drop of prayer.

Mother ! sweet mother ! thou hast taught  
That infant soul to pray,  
Before a rose-leaf from its thought,  
The world has blown away.  
Prayer on that lip that once was thine !  
Thoughts of thine own a part !  
Dropped jewels from thy spirit's mine,  
Sleep scatters o'er her heart !  
“ God bless me, make me a good girl.”—Amen.

## THE ESQUIMAU.

Recent travellers in the Polar regions dwell on the almost magical effect of the Arctic sunset, and the aurora that takes up the "wondrous tale," when the sun has left the horizon. If we can trust those explorers, the rainbow beauty of our clouds, and the soft blush of an Italian sky, must yield by contrast.

THE Esquimau stood by his ice-piled tent,  
And watched the daylight close,  
Till the lingering sun's last ray was spent,  
And night, with its flashing firmament,  
Glared over his world of snows.

'Twas a glorious sight! to see day expire,  
As it waned amid flashing showers ;  
For, with winding-sheet of cloud and fire,  
And the iceberg lit for a funeral pyre,  
Passed that day of months not hours.

Earth was sepulchered ; for, God had hewn  
The ice with His mighty arm ;  
And the wind o'er the marbled snow had thrown  
The drifts like lines on a sculptured stone ;  
Graven by sun and storm.

The Esquimau gazed, and a glanee like the pride  
    Of thought in his dull eye lay,  
A sparkle thrown from mind's rushing tide,  
A foam-wreath flung on a rock's dark side,  
    For a moment, to melt away.

'Twas not the snow on its dazzling height,  
    As it pillow'd the dying day :  
'Twas not the glacier's cup of light,  
    As it held to the dew-fall a chalice bright,  
        Embossed with a living ray.

'Twas but instinct, lifted,—the tangled shade  
    Of a desolate spirit moved :  
As thus his thoughts for an instant played,  
Where sense its dark miasm had laid,  
    And passion had only roved :

"When morning first looked on the frosty air,  
    And turned its snow-dew into gold,  
I tracked my prey to his icy lair,  
And drew from his ebbing life a glare,  
    To flash o'er my midnight cold.

"When the storm shall come with its lightning plume,  
    And snow-feathers fall through the night,  
As it flutters its wing in wrath and gloom,  
To scatter its darkness around my home,  
    I'll laugh,—for my lamp burns bright.

"It burns, when I sleep, and it burns when I wake ;  
    Alike amid toil or repose ;

And a thousand colors my pale walls take,  
As it touches with beauty each glittering flake,  
That spangles my cabin of snows."

O life! when the night of age draws nigh,  
With its darkness around thee hurled,  
Canst thou lift the soul by faith on high,  
And win the light of eternity,  
To brighten an icy world?

And at last, when that Arctic night *has* come,  
To shadow thee as thou art,  
Hast thou gathered affection to lift its gloom,  
A love to gladden thy lonely home  
With the glow of a kindly heart?

O, then, to its solitude gently bring  
Such feelings to foliage decay;  
Some bright little bird that will fold its wing,  
And on life's broken column sweetly sing,  
Though its cornice has fretted away.

## THE MAGDALEN OF CARLO DOLCI.

SHE wept ! the contrite sinner wept  
O'er deed and thought unshiven,  
And conscience, that too long had slept,  
Now trembling turned to heaven.  
She wept ! around, were sin and death  
Her footsteps to betray :  
Above, the heavy cloud of wrath  
Hung midnight o'er her day.  
O God ! Life holds no greater curse,  
Nor greater Death can bring !  
Than thus to tread Thy universe,  
An unloved, blasted thing.  
To feel, as she, a mind that shrinks  
From all its outer soil,  
Yet doomed to bear the heavy links  
Of guilt's unending coil.

Pass not with scorn such wanderers by,  
But rather weep and pray,  
Nor lift to heaven the vaunting cry,  
“ Thank God ! I'm not as they.”

But rather thank thy God, whose care  
From evil sheltered *thee*,  
And fold thy spirit in a prayer,  
And in humility.

O we have love, and love can fling  
The pebbles from life's road ;  
But what hath she,—poor homeless thing,—  
No Hope, no Friend, nor God !

The gentle ones whom Nature made  
Alike in form and mien,  
May weep for her, yet weep afraid  
Lest sympathy were sin.

“ Pass on, lone girl ! thy guilty heart  
May blight a purer fame.”  
Thus woman's pity chills apart,  
Or icicles as blame.

The Chaldee, wrapt in visions bright,  
Sees day's last beams expire ;  
And kindling cloud and lofty height,  
Flash forth its funeral pyre,  
Till stars come forth as pilgrims sage,  
And in the inky skies  
Dip their bright rays, and trace its page  
With varied destinies.  
Read not for her the cloudy leaves  
The winds of sunset turn,  
Not *such* the fate that starlight weaves,  
Nor mortals wish to learn.

Day brings not peace ; the lofty palm  
Drapes the white-bosomed shore ;

But where a feeling high and calm  
To shadow hers once more ?  
The morn ! the ever cheerful morn !  
May gladden hill and grove ;  
But e'en the daylight seems to scorn  
A thing God could not love.  
And then, at evening's quiet hour,  
When thoughts like dew-drops fall  
On living branch, on drooping flower  
The loved, the scattered,—all,—  
*Then mem'ry drew the veil of sin*  
From childhood's spotless days,  
And turned from all she *might* have been,  
To all, alas ! *she was.*

She wept ! the contrite sinner wept !  
O'er deed and thought unshiven,  
And conscience, that too long had slept,  
Now trembling turned to Heaven.  
Hope hath gone out ! and life is dark !  
O, what shall light her fear ?  
A tear ! the soul's own diamond spark,  
And Faith that mixed that tear.  
Faith ! Faith ! that springs from low delay,  
With pinion broad unfurled,  
And sweeps the golden track of day,  
Unshadowed by a world.  
Above where doubt or sorrows roll,  
With lifted heart and eye,  
O, what can chain the eagle soul  
Whose eyrie is on high ?

O Saviour ! at Thy feet she strove  
To win a smile from Heaven ;  
There breathed her prayer, and “ God is Love,”  
And Mary *was* forgiven.  
She knelt ! a withered thing, whose blight  
The worm and mildew weaves ;  
She rose ! a flower of love and light,  
With all its folded leaves !  
Back came the trusting smile of youth,  
And Hope and Feeling too,  
And heart, itself so filled with truth,  
It thought all others true.  
Again sweet thoughts 'twas hers to think  
From Innocence that start,—  
Mind's hidden spring,—few know to drink  
So foliaged by the heart,  
And woman's soft and timid blush  
Again around her stole !  
All radiant ! the dawning flush  
Of a new risen soul.  
Thus pray and weep when Lent's stern hour  
Turns o'er each leaf of soul ;  
And Conscience, with Almighty power,  
Bends o'er the darkened scroll ;  
And ever hear the voice that saith  
To each repentant soul,  
“ O woman ! great has been thy faith !  
Thy faith hath made thee whole.”

## THE CONFIRMATION.

"It is an adoration purely of the spirit,—  
A more sublime bowing of the soul to God."

OWEN FELTHAM.

IT is a solemn hour,—the hour of prayer,  
And there are kneeling at the mercy-seat  
The young of heart, and age with silver hair ;  
And childhood's lisping voices, pure and sweet,  
Join in the anthem that to heaven is swelling,  
While the full spirit trembles in its dwelling.

And thought has left its earthly resting-place,  
And holds communion with its God in heaven ;  
And there is stealing o'er each youthful face,  
The flush which tells how high the soul has risen ;  
Not passion's coloring, but the glow that springs  
From feeling in its loftiest wanderings.

O, what a wreath is woven for the sky !  
Of bright young beings yet unbowed by care,  
Unbroken hearts for immortality !  
And lips whose breath is fragrant with a prayer,

And feelings bound with a bright chain of thought,  
Which many a joyous, happy hour hath wrought.

Life ! will you leave that calm upon the brow  
And gently pass the spirit, moving o'er  
Its brilliant fetters, leaving them as now  
With naught to weep for, nothing to deplore ?  
Earth has temptations, and those too may fall,  
The scattered rose-leaves of thy festival.

O pray, ye young ! ye chosen of the earth !  
For ye are pouring at this holy shrine  
Feelings too bright for woe, too pure for mirth ;  
Now worship thy Creator, now, while thine  
Are orisons from unscathed hearts that spring  
Fresh from the soul, ere life is withering.

And when the deepened fervor of the cheek  
Shall pale beneath the shadows time will fling ;  
And feelings spotless as the snowy flake,  
Melt in the unfathomed depths of suffering ;  
Brightly this hour shall break amid the gloom,  
A star to guide the wanderer to his home.

Thought lifts the past, when at the altar, too,  
I gave a heart to Heaven as warm as thine ;  
Like thine my young lip trembled as "I do"  
Burst from my soul like incense from a shrine ;  
And hopes passed o'er the waters of my eye,  
Bearing glad tidings to eternity.

Thou'l meet the world to wrap thy brow in grief,  
To pale thy cheek with thought, to gather care,

To watch hope's rose-leaf fading, leaf by leaf,  
And make each heart-string tuneless with a tear;  
Yet God still claims thee,—pray,—thou art His own,  
Born for His kingdom and an angel's throne.

Cling to thy creed; for, from each soul a chime  
Hath woke the echoes of eternity,  
Though but a moment of revolving time,  
The same almighty finger points to thee,  
Until the Judgment wind life's slackened chain,  
And spirit lips shall breathe thy vows again.<sup>12</sup>

Pray on, and let devotion float o'er life,  
And gather beauty from its changing care,  
A spray-cloud wrought amid its waves of strife,  
Yet touched with all the glory-hues of prayer;  
Of earth,—though lifted, stretching to the sky,—  
Life—prismed with its Immortality.

## THE LENTEN SABBATH.

"The way before us lies  
Instinct with signs; through which in fixed career,  
As through a zodiac, moves the ritual year  
Of England's Church."

WORDSWORTH.

TOUCH this dark hour with mercy, Saviour ! shed  
Faith on the soul, God's covenant with Care ;  
And lift those deep affections, that o'ershade  
The heart they spring from ; tinge our lives with prayer,  
The spirit-ray ! 'till feeling, 'neath the glow,  
Wave brightly o'er the life it shadows now.

Light to o'er-mantle darkness ! for the Shade,  
Is born of Brilliance ; and its power is known,  
Where deep luxuriance of thought has made  
A forest of the mind, a soil o'ergrown  
With its own progeny. Great God ! 'tis Thine,  
To light its shadowy depths with hope divine.

From the thronged street, and crowded mart, come forth !  
All as one spirit, penitent, to kneel ;

God has proclaimed salvation to the earth !  
A Saviour touched the dying world, to heal !  
The past is but a ruin ! can ye still  
Plan earthly good above its buried ill ?

Thus Herculaneum, in its ashy shroud  
And marbled beauty, sepulchred from sight ;  
While on the spot where palaces are bowed,  
Another city mounts the lava height ;  
Flings to the fiery air its reckless mirth,  
“ And holds its revels o'er an earthquake's birth ! ”

Do they not tremble, when they hear the groan  
Of prisoned burnings warring with the night ?  
Now, lighting up creation as its own !  
Then, sinking into shade, a dying light,  
Within its rocky socket, till it find  
Fresh fuel, to give battle to the wind.  
  
Do they not tremble ? No ! they turn aside,  
When the light glares upon the sleepy eye :  
They see no danger in its burning tide ;  
Its wrecks are 'round them, yet they pass them by :  
O Saviour ! as our souls like danger share,  
Give to the eye its tear, the lip its prayer.

But shall prayer enter Heaven ? devotion spread  
Its earthly shadow in Thy presence bright ?  
Worlds are Thy starry pave ! and 'neath Thy tread,  
Night's sullen darkness vibrates into light !  
“ The heavens declare Thy glory ! ” and shall prayer,  
With all its weight of tears find entrance there ?

What to Thy power is finite joy or grief?  
The heart's lone darkness, or its fitful gleam?  
Humbly my spirit shrinks, as shrinks the leaf  
Beneath the fervor of the risen beam;  
Bends o'er its sepulchre, and waits the blast,  
To bear it as a ruin to the past.

Yet! Thou hast strewed the earth with golden sands;  
And MIND is flashing from its clay to Thee;  
Deep-bedded 'neath its care, Thy gracious hands  
Spread the rich ore of Immortality:  
Veining our life with beauty, and the trust  
Glimmers immortal from its shroud of dust.

O MIND! too beautiful for earth's embrace,  
Here thou mayest hover, but with lifted wing:  
Thy flight is higher than thy dwelling-place;  
Though for awhile an exile, worshipping,  
Perchance too fondly, things of earth that wear  
The soul's enduring impress, graven there.

Thou'l wander with past ages, sack old Rome,  
And tread with pilgrim-steps Egyptian sands,  
Wooing their antique beauty to our home;  
The loveliness and power of distant lands.  
The glowing canvas, and the sculptured stone,  
By art, life-touched, to cenotaph its own.

Pause, where the sculptor hath his soul enshrined,<sup>13</sup>  
And laid his thought within that Parian tomb;  
While wandering from that Hades of the mind,  
Expression suns to light the marble's gloom;

Feature and feeling, flashing o'er the stone,—  
The *written* music with the *breathing* tone.

These are thy starry thoughts ! yet cannot fill  
Thy firmament of being ; though their ray  
Brighten the horizon of earth, yet still,  
'Tis shadow-darkness, to that cloudless day  
Dawning from God,—the soul's eternal glow !  
That folds its sunshine 'round an angel's brow.

Give Heaven thy thoughts. O, let not life deny  
Its daily praise for all a Saviour won ;  
But, as our rushing moments ripple by,  
Yield from their wave a tribute to the sun,  
A dew-drop for the skies ! a hope, a prayer,  
Drawn from the spirit's depths, to sparkle there.

## CHRISTMAS CHANT OF THE WREATH-GATHERERS.

## FIRST VOICE.

FROM hill and from ravine, where Winter breathes free,  
Saviour ! we've gathered a trophy for Thee :  
From rock and from mount, where the laurel had thrown  
Round its hoary temples a victor crown ;  
The branch from the forest, the leaf from the waste,  
The lingering hope of its desolate breast,  
From path and from wood, that the whirlwind had bared,  
We bring to Thee all that the tempest has spared.

## SPIRIT VOICE.

“ Bring thy gift to the altar ! and leave it there ; ”  
It shall almost wave in the breath of prayer ;  
Thus should’st thou welcome the Holy One,  
And yet there is more thou hast left undone.

## SECOND VOICE.

From fields where the storm-wind had drifted its showers,  
Like tomb-stones, scattered o'er buried flowers ;

Where droops the cypress, and gloomy fir,  
 The epitaph of their sepulchre :  
 Clinging like Love to an adverse fate,  
 With beauty to foliage the desolate,  
 The deathless branch of the lonely tree,  
 Is our Hosanna, O God ! to Thee.

## SPIRIT VOICE.

Thy gift to the chaneel ! its clustering shade  
 Shall cling to the shrine where the faithful have prayed :  
 Thus should'st thou weleome the Holy One,  
 And yet there is more thou hast left undone.

## THIRD VOICE.

In the white-besomed snow-drift bright vines were at rest,  
 Beautiful dreams ! of its spotless breast.  
 From the slumbering earth we have bid them arise,  
 And they gird Thy Courts with their prophecies ;  
 And each heart can interpret their blissful theme,  
 For they point to a STAR, like the magi's dream :  
 The vine from the rock, and the moss from its cleft,—  
 Saviour ! we've brought all the tempest has left.

## SPIRIT VOICE.

Yet more ! Thy God would have more ! from the Soul.—  
 That world with the future and past for its pole,  
 Where holy feeling and motive high,  
 Bend over its poise like a sun-sown sky,

Circling its space, and lighting it still,  
Through the changing solstice of good and ill,  
From the winter of soul that a Saviour hath shared,  
Bring all ! bring all ! that temptation has spared.

## CHORUS.

O blessed Saviour ! we bring to Thee  
The *strength* that sprung in adversity ;  
The rock for its birth-place, yet brightly it springs,  
And beauteously shadows life's meaner things ;  
Rooted in danger, unwavering and sure,  
In firmness of purpose it rises secure ?  
The power to *endure*, and the heart that hath dared,  
We bring to Thee all that the tempest has spared.

## SPIRIT VOICE.

Yet more ! thy God would have more ! O bring  
The FAITH that grew brightest in suffering ;  
The chastened spirit, yet cheerful the while,  
The broken heart, and the trusting smile ;  
The “*True Vine*” entwines thee,—for thee He hath cared,—  
And ye are the “*Branches*” His Mercy has spared.

## CHORUS.

Thought of the Godhead ! that Thou should'st be  
Translated in our humanity !  
Grief walled existence, but Mercy has stole  
The day-beam's joy to the dungeon'd soul.

Through cleft and through crevice glory streams bright,  
And dust and shadow are woven with light :<sup>14</sup>  
That light on our spirits, we fear not the tomb,  
Nor heaven nor earth is o'ershadowed with gloom.

## SOLO.

A leaf in life's forest is touched by decay,  
But that leaf in a sunbeam is withering away.

## ALL.

A living Faith spreads o'er its perishing sod !  
Bright thing of the desert ! we bring thee to God.

## DEATH.

"From Death the soul draws back,  
As from a stream in winter, though the chill  
Be but a moment's."

MANFRED.

'Tis hard in youth to die,  
When life is beautiful; withdraw the trust,  
And bid the heart unclasp each human tie,  
And yield itself to dust.

God gave the germ to earth,  
The soul, transplanted from its home on high,  
And thought and feeling as bright leaves put forth,  
And as bright leaves to die.

Come, Death! when life has climbed  
The Alpine path of years, and on the height  
Feeling grows holy, and each thought sublimed  
As touched with dying light,—

When time has chilled the tear,  
And the tired heart above its care has risen,  
And earthly sympathies grown frigid here,  
Can lose themselves in heaven.

For then 'tis gentle strife,—

The heart's own tremor, or a passing breath,  
Will hurl the atom from the mass of life,

The avalanche in leath.

But fold thy darkened wing,

Lest the young heart beneath its shade grow cold,  
Wait till the bloom of life is perishing,  
And all its joy is told.

The heart that lights our home,

That storm and darkness but more faithful prove,  
O, can we yield that bosom to the tomb,  
With all its wealth of love?

Love! that æolian chord

That takes life's tempest on its trembling string,  
And turns its wrath to music,—hath the word  
In Heaven no ceiling?

Yes; from the height of time,

Onward,—forever, shall the feeling roll;  
And from the grave reverberate the chime,  
Through the long age of soul.

Then, what is it to die,

If Death but lengthen, do not part the chain?  
Grant us, great God! Thine own eternity,  
To count its links again.

VII.

## THE LAST OF ALL.

THE beloved sister, who had been the chosen companion of her life,—the same whom she had greeted in her first infant verses,—thus records her farewell :

“ I can never forget the last evening that we passed together. It was the final link in the chain of golden hours, that, commencing in childhood, encircled our lives, ending only with her death.

“ A brilliant fire was burning in the grate ; the curtains drooped heavily before the windows, shutting out more closely the external world ; a bright lamp was shedding its cheerful light over the room, and what to us both was ever a luxury—we were alone.

“ She sat by the fire-side in a large cushioned chair. The folds of her wrapper fell around her still beautiful figure, only adding to that native gracefulness of which disease could not rob her. Her dark hair, drawn back from her brow, was neatly braided on either side, and contrasted beautifully with the white transparent cap beneath which it was gathered. Her little slippers foot rested upon a low ottoman, and her right arm was suspended in touching help-

lessness by her side. Sickness had added delicacy to her complexion, and a brilliant hectic to her cheek, which in happier days was ever too pale.

"I drew the other footstool towards me, and sat down,—where I always did in spirit,—at her feet, and gazed up into that face, then to me lovelier and dearer than ever. She looked down smilingly upon me, her eyes beaming with affection, and subdued happiness.

"'This is delightful,' she said; 'how I enjoy having you with me. And now we will have a little poetry. Did I ever show you that beautiful sprig that dear A—— (her sister) brought me from Europe? It shaded Petrarch's favorite walk, and I have always valued it highly. It is here in my desk. No! keep it, dear. I have had it long enough: and here is the last piece that I was able to write. It is called 'Words over a Grave.'

"'I was quite ill one day when my poor little D—— came rushing up to my bed-side, in such a state of excitement, throwing his arms around my neck, and sobbing so bitterly that I could not, for a long time, discover the cause of his agitation. At last he exclaimed, 'Dear, dear, mother, promise me that you will *never, never die!* The servants say that I shall soon have no mother!' She paused, covering her eyes for a moment with her hand, and then went on with a slight trembling in her voice:—'You know, my nights are very wakeful, and that little incident suggested these lines. Keep them, too, dear: the writing was my last effort,' and smiling sadly, as she glanced toward her arm, 'I cannot write now.' Then raising her eyes, with their usual thoughtful expression, she repeated them, with a pathos that was heart-breaking. But as she finished, she turned toward me, and, with the disinterestedness that marked her every action, instantly changed her voice and manner; with a cheerfulness almost amounting to vivacity, adding, 'And now I will repeat something different to you.'

“‘ Do you know that at night, when my sufferings become acute, I can only endure them by throwing my mind upon some subject, and in the excitement of composition I almost forget how pain is racking and tearing this poor casket to pieces. It is singular, to feel one’s self two such entirely separate beings. My mind seems for the time disembodied,—to float above and away from my body.’

“ Then, like the fairy who ‘spoke pearls,’ she repeated poem after poem of unwritten poetry, till, strung upon that little thread of time, it was difficult to say which gem was the most beautiful. I have sometimes wondered that I did not copy them; but how could I break in upon that traned, almost sublimated hour, with the mere mechanism of thought?

“ Can it be wondered, that as I looked upon that face, lofty with its pure and elevated thoughts, radiant with the light of the genius within, and full of the spirit of love and adoration,—for her thoughts were even worship,—that to my eye, at least, she seemed already almost transfigured.

“ We parted. ‘How sweet it is,’ she said, ‘to think, in this sad hour, that, in all our past intercourse, there has never been one unkind thought or word between us. \* \* \* And now, my precious sister,’ she said, as her arm for the last time on earth encircled my neck, and her tears fell upon my face, ‘now go. May heaven’s richest blessing ever rest upon you: now go, go *instantly!*’ she said, as if she could bear no more. As the door closed, she added solemnly, ‘I shall never see her again.’ She spoke truly.”

This incident of the two sisters parting thus midway in their lives, is clasped, by a touching coincidence, to that of their meeting in childhood: then, one of them was found prattling in broken words of verse over the cradle of the other; now, the other sat at her feet, and heard her reciting, in the firm tones of faith, the last lay of her departing soul!

I have but little more to add. The gnawing tooth of that "worm of Nilus" did at last cut

"This knot intrinsicate  
Of life."

and Sophia went that day into Paradise.

Even then she left behind the fragrance of a fond and tender thought. Her husband, during all that illness would never leave her, preferring to be disturbed at night rather than not rest by her side. As her agonies grew day by day more and more exerueciating, she felt their monition of her approaching end, but only feared that she might die in the night, and overwhelm him with the shock of finding her gone, while he had been sleeping beside the dead body of his wife.

Shortly after, the pain gradually subsided, but the mistaken kindness of the physician concealed from those around her its fatal indication. Suspecting it herself, with her old smile she said to him, "Dear J——, what perfect bliss it is to be free from pain!" As he was about to take his usual place beside her, she assigned some reason for wishing to be removed to the sofa-bedstead near, if he would have it prepared for her. He carried her thither in his arms, and watched her till she fell asleep. Several times in the night he listened, and heard her quiet breathing. At day-break, she lay there still in slumber. He rose as usual and admitted her boy. The little fellow went up to her noiselessly, as if he feared to waken her: but, attracted by the happy smile he saw upon her lips, he softly touched the hand that lay upon the coverlet.—"O father! mother is so cold!"

## WORDS OVER A GRAVE.

DID she suffer long? O yes! and 'tis best  
To wipe our tears, when such weary ones rest:  
Fond hearts watched o'er her, for many a day,  
Lest life's torn petals should fall to their clay:  
                        But they fell to their clay.

Did she sorrow to live, when her husband was near?  
There lay 'neath her eyelid an unshed tear:  
But it trickled not till her boy drew nigh,  
And asked his pale mother *never* to die!  
                        Never to die!

Did mind flit from her, with Death afar,  
And left it the gate of the grave, ajar?  
While tenantless life, outlined as before.  
Was the shadow of mind through that open door?  
                        Through that *open* door.

No; praise to Jehovah! for mercy thus shown,  
The light and its shadow at once were withdrawn:

Yet she trimmed her faith, ere she went away,  
God grant there was oil in the lamp that day.  
In the lamp that day.

The funeral train like a gulf-stream wound,  
Through the ocean of life that was heaving around ;  
In silence it moved, as the wreck it bore,  
Where the grave-stones pebble the church-yard shore,  
The church-yard shore.

We lingered long by that cold grave side.  
While back to the world swept the funeral tide ;  
Far from the Death-beach it ebbed away,  
Nor missed from its bosom a drop of spray.  
A drop of spray.

And must dust absorb it? Ah no!—if she shone  
Among Christ's jewels, a precious stone,—  
When judgment shall open the grave's rough shell,  
She may lie a pearl,—but we cannot tell,  
We cannot tell.

## N O T E S.

*Page* 16.

(1) "Wintry days."

The first years were full of difficulty and discouragement.

*Page* 36.

(2) "Stuttering 'God skin a Roman' with wry faces."

Allusion to school-boys attempting: "Gods! can a Roman Senate long debate," etc.

*Page* 54.

(3) "But like the sea-shell far removed,  
Love murmurs for its own."

"And for its birth-place moans,  
As moans the ocean shell."—HEMANS.

*Page 73.*

(4) "Beside our door there lingers one,  
Whose gaze is on the setting sun."

The scene here, is herself and infant seated on the back piazza of the old mansion, looking at the sun sinking behind the range of wood-crowned hills far up in the horizon. Standing by her side is Judge ——, her father-in-law, a tall, elegant old man of the type and school now long gone by. As the subsequent allusions in the poem indicate, his career had been a distinguished one; and to this day, as the brilliant orator and the jurist, his name is honored and revered in his native State.

*Page 73.*

(5) "For he is old, and death so near,  
That oft he starts his step to hear."

"I think it was Fontenelle, who, when an old lady remarked that death seemed to have forgotten them, replied, 'Hush! speak softly, or he will hear us.'"

*Page 75.*

(6) "True as the willow-wand to find  
The hidden birth-place of the mind."

Some may not be aware, that a willow-wand borne in the hands of persons peculiarly constituted, will indicate by its motions the presence of springs of water underground.

*Page 76.*

(7) "Brother of early life is gone."

A younger brother of Judge ——, to whom he was deeply attached, and whose talents had created a universal expectation of great future eminence.

*Page 104.*

(8) "He lived till age had crowned with snows  
 His brow; yet, like the Syrian hill,  
 Amid the waste of life he rose  
 And verdure clasped his bosom still."

"Clarke, in his travels, mentions these hills as presenting to the eye a three-fold aspect: the first, *sand*; the second, *verdure*; and the third, *snow*."

*Page 118.*

(9) "O has my spirit graved a line  
 Its angel may record in Heaven."

"Pythagoras enforced upon his disciples, that each day should have its *line*,—something to designate their intellectual advancement; and we, under the influence of a purer creed, may yet apply the same moral to its philosophy."

*Page 119.*

(10) "Wilt thou not smoothe its ruffled wing,  
 And guard it for a brighter morrow?"

*Genesis* viii: 9–11.

*Page 125.*

(11) "God bless me, make me a good girl."—AMEN.

A lovely little child heard murmuring this prayer in her dream, was the occasion of these lines.

*Page 136.*

(12) \* \* \* \* "for from each soul a chime  
Hath woke the echoes of Eternity."

The figure in these lines is much finer in an impromptu verse from which it was altered and adapted, entitled, "Address of the Old Year to the New."

"Though but a moment in the clock of Time  
The same Almighty Finger points to thee,  
While to the earth I fling my parting chime,  
And give its echo to Eternity,  
Till History shall wind the slackened chain,  
And strike events on the world's ear again."

*Page 139.*

(13) "Pause where the Sculptor has his soul enshrined,  
And laid his thought within that Parian tomb."

The reader will of course bear in mind, that the sculptor here, is dead, and that his spirit, as it were, still wanders "from that Hades of the mind," the sculptured stone.

*Page 144.*

(14) "Through cleft and through crevice glory streams bright,  
And dust and shadow are woven with light."

"This allusion will be perfectly understood by those who, in a darkened room, have seen a sunbeam, stealing through a neglected shutter or undrawn curtain, and uniting its subtle beauty with the motes floating in the atmosphere. It may illustrate the entrance of grace into 'the soul that sitteth in darkness and the shadow of death,' yet finding access through the imperfection of our nature, and blending with action and its motive.

'Till "dust and shadow" are woven with light.' "

NOTE. Such of the above notes as are put within inverted commas, were found attached to the poems.

T H E   E N D .

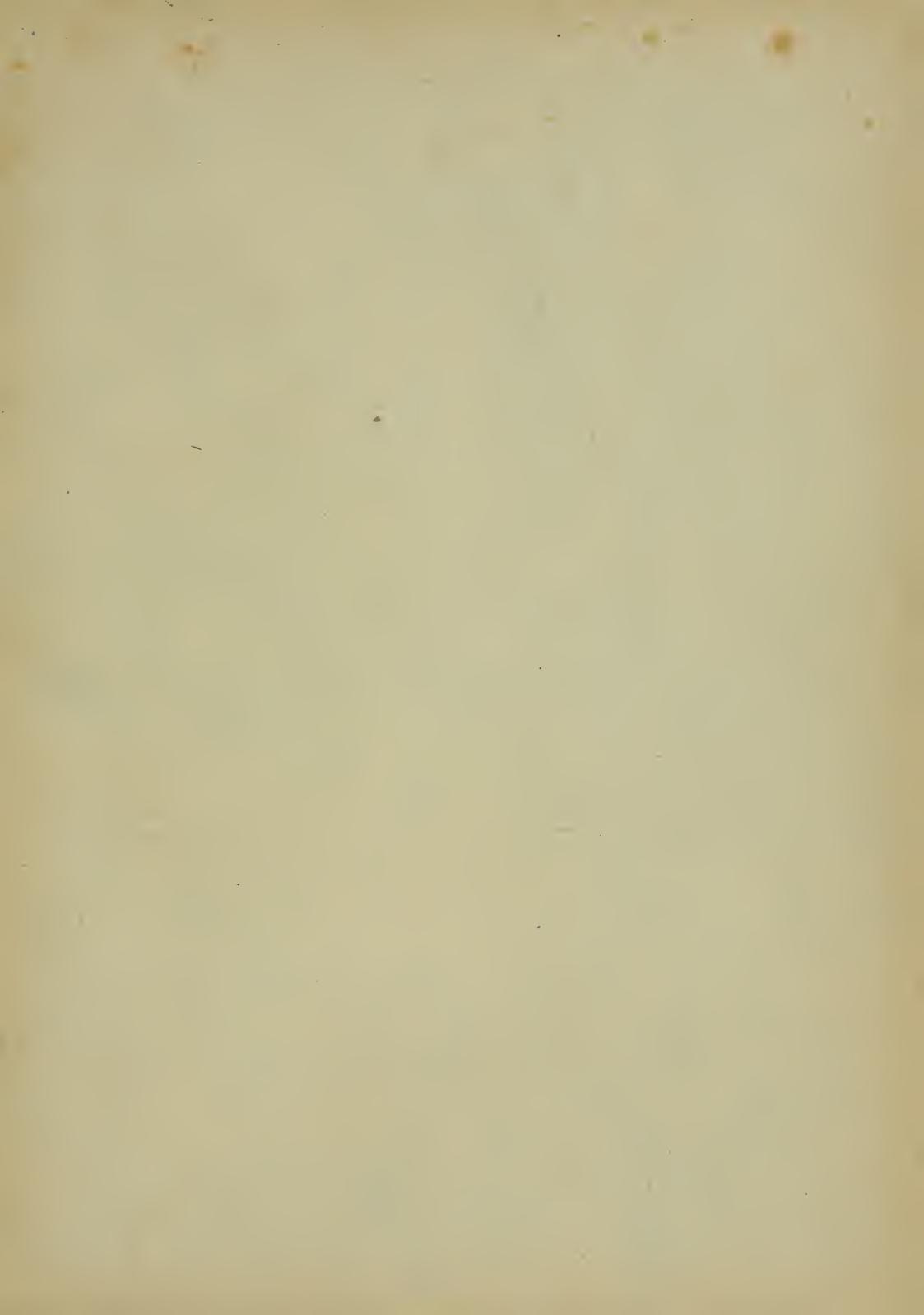
















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